TEESSIDE UNIVERSITY

A Mixed Methods Study Exploring the Impact of Marketisation and Student Recruitment in a Case Study Higher Education Provider

Alison Watson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Teesside University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

3/5/2019

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank my Director of Studies Dr Ewan Ingleby and my Supervisor Dr Clive Hedges for their guidance and advice throughout my PhD. I would also like to acknowledge the supervision and direction afforded to me by Professor Mark Davies and Professor David Newton. I thank my colleagues for their support whilst I completed my research and my critical friend Dr Benjamin Silverstone for his patience and honesty.

I also want to thank my family for unconditionally supporting me during completion of my thesis. I especially thank my father William Glasper for his endless encouragement and his well-chosen words after retirement, “I now live my life through the eyes of my daughter”. No other motivation to succeed was required.

Abstract

This thesis focuses on a Higher Education Provider's (HEP) response to marketisation and, specifically, the diversification of the pedagogic approach used to deliver its degrees. The focus of the research explores the development of a Blended learning model, the introduction of campus study centres, segmentation and new student recruitment strategies. A systematic approach to the literature review revealed a number of factors that lead students to applying to university. These factors formed the basis of a set of questions put to the student population of the Blended learning programmes. In-depth interviews were also conducted with university management to gain an understanding of the reasons for change within the HEP and the commercial strategies implemented in order to secure student numbers in a competitive market. The findings reveal a relative ease to entering the Blended learning market. This, it is suggested, has been largely due to responding to student needs and by working collaboratively with a range of stakeholders to deliver relevant courses. The programmes meet student expectations of work readiness and enhanced employability skills.

The research focuses on four main segments of the adult higher education market. The results suggest two of the segments have been successfully recruited from and are performing well. The other two segments are more challenging in relation to the perceived capabilities of the students. The research addresses these difficulties and provides recommendations to improve communication between the Marketing and Admissions departments and the students. The research also provides an overview of successful marketing communication tools and recommendations for future enhancements, such as erecting signage and utilising endorsements from others, such as, from other students.

The thesis adds an original contribution to understanding pedagogic delivery within Blended learning in a private university. It also provides the academic community with four alternative segments to consider in the higher education sector. The research also adds to the body of literature with regards to economic and emotional factors within the student recruitment process and the effective use of marketing communications.

Contents

Volume 1

Volume 2

Figures and Tables

[Key Abbreviations: Higher Education Institution (HEI), Higher Education Provider (HEP), Higher Education (HE)]

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.0 Background to the higher education market

Gyamera and Burke (2018) argue that students have become a main influencer of higher education curriculums, fundamentally placing pressure on these institutions to provide more vocational forms of learning that will aid them in their pursuit of employment. Bartlett et al. (2002) argue that 'marketisation' is influencing educational courses and degrees based, at least in theory, on the views and ideals of a number of different stakeholders. External stakeholders contribute to course design and the provisions offered by educational institutions such as vocational placements. Abrahamson (2016) supports this view and identifies the formation of partnerships between higher education institutions and external marketing agents. It has been found that using such partnerships improves communications and recruitment which, as a consequence, leads to quality applicants and admissions to educational institutions.

According to Randle and Brady (1997) marketisation encourages the voice of the student to be heard and, as a result, incentivises higher education institutions to gather feedback and complaints in order to improve teaching and learning techniques. These researchers indicate that as management try to be driven by profit, teachers struggle with major shifts in style to 'commercial' or 'student-led' education. Newman and Jahdi (2009) argue that academics have become stressed due to the effects of marketisation and the increasing market driven and profit driven environment. Some academics fear retribution if they do not conform to new standards set by management. To some extent, Nixon, Scullion and Hearn (2018) and Wong and Chiu (2017), also focus on the student's expectations and 'entitlement', placing pressure on academics to understand their changing role. In such a highly competitive environment there appears to be a reduction in higher education being led by the academics. Some suggest that they are now being led by the stakeholder.

Ramachandran (2010) places an emphasis on the traditions of the Higher Education Institution (HEI). Traditionally education's place within society was to develop knowledge, serve the community, teach students and engage in research. HEI's today are complex and are required to offer differentiated programmes to balance institutional economies with educational growth opportunities. It is argued that it is no longer the case that programmes are being driven by the HEI, but rather from a range of interested parties, that is stakeholders such as the students, the parents and businesses (Dodds, 2011). Brooks, Byford and Sela (2016) argue that a higher education qualification has become a 'private investment', and Carey (2013) also argues that this shift in the higher education sector has been welcomed by the media, the public and Government agencies.

As the HE external environment has become more competitive and dynamic, marketisation has become a key aspect of the strategic thinking of HEIs, as it drives growth and encourages the HEI to respond to market forces. The marketing mix has become an important element for the HEI's marketing function because it encourages the attraction and retention of students, thus helping to maximise student numbers. Joseph (1998) and Waimer and Vining (1999) have put forward the notion of the student becoming the 'customer'. Jongbloed (2003) suggests that competition between HEIs provides a context for the student to have the freedom of movement. As a consequence, he or she is not restricted by rigid parameters and can thus explore different HEIs in search of programmes relevant to his or her future career development. Randle (1997), Molesworth, Scullion and Nixon (2009), and Newman and Jahdi (2009) all explore the demands of students when selecting and studying at a HEI and identify the importance of acknowledging these demands and responding effectively to them. Tomlinson (2017) argues that students develop a consumerist attitude to some extent, largely as a result of the changing relationships between the student and HEI. This is due to the personal costs incurred by students who, consequently could consider themselves to be 'paying customers'.

Dill (1997) explains how HEIs should in their opinion, be driven by the market and to take a marketing-orientated view. It is suggested that one way to do this is by modifying the teaching curriculum in order to make it more vocationally relevant to the student. At this point it is important to emphasise that the higher education sector is not homogenous. As a consequence, some HEIs will develop vocational subjects, whilst others will remain steadfast, stress their heritage and continue to deliver traditional academic subjects. Tomlinson (2017) suggests caution with respect to this view made by Dill (1997), and presents a differing argument suggesting that taking the vocational approach can lead to devaluing the social and economic outcomes of degrees. Green (2003) takes a different position and discusses the notion of re-engineering HEIs towards marketing principles in order for them to remain competitive. Bunzel (2007) examines the ways that HEIs engage in such marketing and branding programmes. Molesworth, Scullion and Nixon (2009), and Ramachandran (2010) find that the Government is encouraging more ‘Capitalist’ free economic principles, thus encouraging competition within the higher education market. Ramachandran (2010), in particular, highlights the Government’s use of marketing principles when deploying funding. The significance of these studies, therefore, suggests that HEIs possibly need to become more familiar with the marketing function when attracting students to their programmes. Tomlinson (2017) argues that this approach can lead to a fundamental disruption of pedagogic relations. In his view the very notion of teaching becomes secondary to commercial considerations, as will be discussed later.

Marketisation imposes a number of specific ‘marketing’ conditions on HEIs. Onderwijsraad (2001) explores a number of these conditions in this new world of higher education. For instance, there is the potential freedom to enter into this market, for example, private institutions, (such as the current chosen HEP), can become a ‘higher education provider’ as long as they meet certain criteria. HEIs also have the freedom to specify the programmes they supply as long as there is market demand for them. HEIs can also set their own charges and entry points. It is then the responsibility of the student to meet these entry requirements.

Marketing conditions can also apply to the student. Onderwijsraad (2001) explains that the student has free choice in relation to a preferred provider for study and choice of curriculum. However, Sharrock (2000) questions the notion that the student is the ‘customer’. Whilst, within industry the customer can make some demands with regards to quality and expected service, the academic student might not be in a position to make the same demands if he or she is not qualified and specialised in a particular field, as White (2018) indicates. Inevitably, all students are never in a position to fully understand the curriculum due to its complexities and specialisms. Sharrock (2000) also warns against allowing the student to co-produce courses. What if the student fails? Can he or she then sue? New consumer laws, for example The Consumer Rights Act 2015 (National Archives, 2015), may impact on these situations and encourage claims from students. Taylor and Sandeman (2016) report on such a case whereby a graduate from Oxford University attempted to sue the university for £1million due to not receiving his expected grade. Co-producing may create problems for the HEI due to fear of repercussions from disgruntled parties and any subsequent financial and reputational penalties being imposed. The traditions of academics in the past have been to question and challenge students, so does marketisation allow for this, given that the student is now the ‘customer’ and his or her demands must be met?

Sharrock (2000) discusses the social contract between the parties and rejects the idea that students are simply customers. He suggests that the primary activity of education is ‘education’ and not ‘business’. This view is one to which Molesworth, Scullion and Nixon (2009) also draw attention to. Conflict arises between marketisation and education when perceived ‘good’ education, in other words traditional approaches to academia opposes economic growth. Bates and Godon (2017) also stress the complexities of treating higher education like a business; they warn against accepting this perspective in respect of institutions aiming to maintain ‘academic quality’.

Marketing communications is by no means a new phenomenon. However, as Smith and Zook (2011) argue, such communications have changed forever and new opportunities have arisen largely due to changes in communication models. Chapleo, Duran and Diaz (2011), conducted research on universities’ marketing effectiveness using websites. They find that whilst the functional values of the universities are communicated well, for example teaching and research, emotional values are not communicated so effectively, such as social responsibility. This leaves a gap in the delivery of better differentiated products and services to students as their emotional needs are not accommodated. Website design is an important communication channel to attract potential students. Such design informs students of products and services and helps to turn the functional and emotional values of a university into successful course recruitment and enrolment. Klassen (2002) identifies the need for institutions to form emotional bonds and relationships by offering a more interactive experience to potential students on their websites.

Gajic (2012) examines the importance of marketing communications and, in particular, the coding of a message that can be effectively decoded by students. The mode of communication must be able to reach the target audience and include a feedback mechanism to help validate the communication strategy. Lipman-Hearne (2010) also alludes to the importance of measuring the success of communication strategies to justify expenditure, as well as aiding in the monitoring of the results from recruitment campaigns. Varadanin (2017) suggests that a unified approach to marketing communications and the marketing mix will lead to competitive advantage.

Wilford (2011) argues that there are a number of ways in which marketing departments can operate successfully, such as focusing on improved efficiency and allocating the marketing budgets appropriately. This supports the research of Jongbloed (2003) on the encouragement of institutions performing cost-benefit analyses. Wilford (2011), additionally, promotes the notion of 'playing to win' and knowing what the competition is doing; raising the status of the brand of an institution; and getting 'social' by targeting audiences via Twitter and Facebook. Peruta and Shields (2018) also state the importance of these sites in developing effective communications with students. Wilford (2011) goes on to identify digital platforms as a means of communication by using social sites, email, and SMS, an approach also supported positively by Clark, Fine and Schever (2017). These researchers argue in favour of going where the audience is and converting them through student recruitment initiatives. They posit the example of visiting the students' current school or college and communicating the HEI's offer of products and facilities; thus turning any interest into the next potentially new cohort of students. This latter point is also supported by Kolchina and Martino (2016), who focus on developing innovative products to encourage increases in student applications and improved positioning in the marketplace.

Hundal and Grover (2012) examine the impact of SMS advertising and conclude that it is one of the most effective communication tools within marketing today. Educational institutions use this at present in order to inform current students about the details of their course offerings. Hesketh and Knight (1999) study the choice factors of the student and link this to prospectuses. They find that quite often a prospectus fails to give sufficient information about the practical and academic aspects of a programme.

A more general view of marketing communications is explored by Newman and Jahdi (2009). They argue that whilst both further education and higher education institutions are becoming more familiar with the concept of marketing, the marketing mix is still expanding. It is no longer enough for these institutions to focus solely on the four P's of 'product', 'price', 'promotion' and 'place', but to extend this to the remaining 3P's of 'people', 'process' and 'physical evidence' (Booms and Bitner 1981). According to Hernández-Diaz et al. (2017), employees within an institution should be required to work together to gain a collaborative understanding and demonstration of empathy with students' needs.

External influences on the decision making process are important factors to consider when HEIs orientate themselves towards this new 'market place'. According to Fatima and Khan's (2008) research, 'word-of-mouth' is important when students make their decisions on choosing a university. People with knowledge of the institution, such as close family, can have a significant impact on the potential new student and his/her preferred choice of HEI. They do so through word of mouth and endorsement of the organisation. Foskett and Hemsley-Brown (2005), make reference to a wide range of influences including Government policy, social, economic, compulsory and post compulsory factors. All of these must be taken into consideration by a marketing department when they review their campaigns and marketing communications in order to recruit students to the institution. These factors, identified by the authors, can contribute to the development of a segmentation strategy to ensure that institutions are targeting appropriate students. Choudaha, Chang and Schulmann (2013) stress the importance to HEIs of focusing on segmentation strategies when recruiting students. Spiro (1978) finds that segmentation at the point of recruitment ensures that potential students become knowledgeable of an HEI's strengths, and that logic suggests that such segmentation is more likely to match a student's aspirations with respect to the institutional environment.

Joseph (1998) alludes to the notion of the 'student-customer' and suggests that there are a number of considerations that students take account of prior to choosing an educational institution. In view of this, the marketing departments need to understand exactly what these factors are and how they can be integrated within their marketing campaigns in order to encourage student enrolment. Collaboration is essential between the marketing department and academics to successfully identify these factors.

There are many complexities within the higher education market due to the marketisation process and educational reform. The Government encourages competition and accessibility to all potential students interested in enrolment into HEIs. Whilst there are many benefits of marketisation, which will be critically analysed in the next chapter, there are also drawbacks to the process. Bates and Gordon (2017) and Bendixen and Jacobsen (2017) place an emphasis on the complexities of attempting to deliver programmes in accordance with the demands of the market, whilst, simultaneously, attempting to retain the importance of 'reflectiveness' in learning; in other words, providing time for students to contemplate on the new knowledge gained.

Changes in a number of higher education institutions have to some extent seen a shift from 'traditional subjects', such as, History and English, to the introduction of more 'vocational' courses; for example social care. Tomlinson (2017) discusses these changes in the higher education market and finds that some value has been added as vocationally-inclined students perceive enhancements to programmes that may ultimately lead to entrance into the labour market. Increased competition within the market has introduced both negative and positive responses from higher education institutions. An 'open' market reduces barriers to entry. Take, for instance, the reform in the 1990s of upgrading Polytechnics to university status. Private for-profit institutions such as BPP (established in 1992), have also become more prominent as a higher education provider of degrees, thus creating even further competition within the sector.

1.1 Introduction to the chosen case study higher education provider

Finn (2012) reports on the rise of private for-profit organisations entering the higher education sector. Due to higher tuition fees and Government reform, accessibility to the higher education market for some HEIs has become somewhat easier. This has led to increased competition. Whilst private degree awarding universities are independent they are still able to access the student loans facilities through Student Finance England. This has enabled them to compete with more conventional and established academic institutions. Finn (2012) argues that the increase in private universities has led to the ‘sharpening up’, or improved quality, of university courses in the market, due to the increased threat of rivalry amongst HEIs.

The case study higher education provider (HEP), which is the focus of this thesis, was formed in 1990 under a different name. It was established as a consequence of the formation of partnerships with conventional/ traditional universities in order to provide distance learning courses around the globe. To date the HEP has recruited and supported 50,000 students on degree programmes, (The For-Profit HEP, 2016). In April 2014 the HEP was awarded taught degree awarding powers. The decision and strategy undertaken by the institution was to award its own degrees having accepted a commitment to quality academic standards (The For-Profit HEP, 2016). In August 2015 the HEP was given full university title status, and in April 2016 the institution relaunched itself under a new university name and became the only HEP to launch a new brand in distance learning within the last 50 years (The For-Profit HEP, 2016).

In order to complement the distance learning provision due to declining numbers of distance learning students, the management proposed a strategy to enter into on-campus teaching, thus offering students a ‘blended’ higher educational experience. This entails online discussions and written learning materials being made available to all registered students via the virtual learning environment supported by the Moodle platform, complemented with a standard 12 hours on-campus contact time. The view of the HEP is that this blended model attracts various market segments and delivers education in its own niche way. As a result of this mode of educational delivery, students have contact with a tutor in a study centre (campus), whilst also having full access to the online ‘distance learning’ suite of materials. Song and Kapur (2017), advocate this ‘flipped classroom’ model as it provides students with the opportunity to review materials online first, and think about their learning before more formal interactions take place with their tutors in-class. This then provides time to discuss working problems and case studies interactively, rather than being presented with materials and lectures. This is not a new phenomenon and many higher education institutions post their lectures and lessons online via platforms such as Moodle and Blackboard. However, this current provider considers that it differentiates itself through the well-established experience and expertise of its tutors and support staff. Whilst these tutors and support staff may be knowledgeable and skilful enough to deliver such a mode of pedagogy, Yilman (2017) examines student satisfaction and dissatisfaction with respect to e-learning, and draws attention to the level of students’ capability and readiness for involvement in such a mode of learning. Hence, continuous monitoring of student participation online is suggested to observe the degree to which students remain motivated and engaged with the Blended delivery.

The case study HEP has been selected for the focus of this research for the following reasons:

- There has been some decline in the institution’s distance learning enrolments due to greater competition within the national and international environment. Pappano (2012) refers to 2012 being the ‘year of the MOOCs’, these being short, free uncredited courses. Institutions such as Coursera, the University of London, and the University of Edinburgh have all registered students onto these courses, which have increased competition with the HEP, in addition to the competition from other national and international online higher education providers.

- The HEP has recently launched itself (April 2016) as a new university in the higher education marketplace. Therefore, it will be interesting to see how the market reacts to it. This current research has been designed to provide a better understanding of the pressures on the case study provider’s, use of segmentation and integrated marketing communications to compete in the new HE marketplace.

- The Blended delivery approach is new to the institution. This form of delivery includes 12 hours on-campus contact time plus online participation through discussions and activities on the virtual learning environment. Thus, researching this strategy whilst in its infancy may help to indicate, to a degree, its anticipated long term longevity and sustainability. It will help to establish whether there is an acceptance of this approach to pedagogy within the institution and suggest some of its effects more generally on teaching and learning in HEIs. Organisationally, this study may be considered particularly pertinent and important as the HEP aims to expand quickly.

- The institution has invested a substantial amount of time and money in market research to identify a name that is recognisable and accepted by the student population. Part of the research will therefore, examine brand recognition. An appraisal of the emotional attachment that students place on the brand will also be interesting to explore. The findings will be aimed at contributing to further marketing communications strategies and initiatives in order to understand and possibly enhance students' rational and emotional attachments to the institution, and thus help to understand the challenges to the University's long-term commercial viability and some wider aspects of the new HE marketplace.

1.1.1 The researcher's position in the HEP

At this point it is important to identify where the researcher is positioned within this study. As a member of the academic staff within the HEP she is considered an 'insider-researcher'. According to Mercer (2007), an insider-researcher is someone who has intimate knowledge of a group. Unluer (2012) explores the role of such a researcher, and in particular identifies the advantages and disadvantages of being in such a position, for instance, an advantage is, being situated within a group enables the researcher to acquire greater access to data. Access will of course be within the parameters set in relation to ethical and data protection requirements outlined by the organisation. Having an existing rapport with participants can also allow for a more trusting environment, whereby conversations can flow more fluently, this is clearly another positive consequence of this role.

Unluer (2012), however, also draws caution to this insider role and argues that bias may present itself during the research process, leading to misrepresentation of data, and sensitive information may not be handled in an appropriate manner. Rooney (2005) suggests overcoming the issue of bias through the use of an external advisor, whereby ideas and thoughts can be discussed and meaning can be created through impartial questions. Another limitation of the role is duality. Holian and Coghlan (2013) describe role duality as one where the researcher already holds a position within an organisation and then becomes the researcher too. This can cause some confusion amongst those being researched as to the actual role of the researcher. To overcome this Unluer (2012) suggests being clear and transparent with all parties involved from the commencement of the research with regards to the role of the researcher.

The benefits and shortcomings of the insider-researcher role were considered before the HEP was decided upon as the focal point of this thesis. After some deliberation the researcher determined that using the HEP as the case study for the research was appropriate. The many benefits outlined already were a deciding factor, the researcher already had knowledge of the university and certainly the interview participants, and therefore there was an element of trust in existence between the two parties. This hopefully encouraged greater participation and flow of information during the interview process. With regards to the survey, unfortunately the same rapport was not possible as a census approach does not allow for such an intimate relationship to be developed. Instead accessibility to this group was deemed as the advantage and this was another reason for focusing on this HEP.

To overcome the potential threats of the 'insider-researcher' the researcher used her 'critical friend' to share ideas and commentary on progression of the study. This was a useful exercise and ensured bias was removed and managed appropriately. In relation to the handling of sensitive information the researcher guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality throughout the entire research process.

1.2 Justification for the research - practice

The research will hopefully inform the HEP (and other higher education practitioners), about the volume and use of segmentation strategy within the recruitment process and the effective use of integrated marketing communications when attracting students to an institution. Gaining a deeper understanding of the emotional and rational thought processes of a potential student and those stakeholders influencing that student, will hopefully aid the case study HEP to develop effective strategies.

1.3 Justification for the research – original contribution

The contribution to knowledge will be largely based on the impact that marketisation has had on the private HEP and, in particular, how Blended learning pedagogy has been developed to bridge a gap between academic programmes and the expectations of the 'work-ready' student population. The thesis will address and respond to the placement of segmentation strategy within the higher educational student recruitment process. The research will also endeavour to provide some contribution theoretically and practically to the rational and emotional factors relating to HE and marketing communications.

1.4 Scope and limitations

The research will not examine marketisation in other educational sectors or institutions, although this case study should provide some insight into the effects of embracing an innovative, blended delivery model in a 'private' part of a quasi-market orientated sector. The research will remain focused on ensuring that useful content and data is collected, which is relevant to the activities of the chosen HEP. The sample participants will be taken from the following disciplines: business, law, computing, healthcare management, and psychology and criminology.

Another limitation of the research relates to the demand for confidentiality and careful presentation of the HEP required by the management. For business and commercial reasons the HEP has not allowed its name to be used as part of the research. The researcher empathises with this requirement in order to protect the provider and the research. Any misrepresentation and inclusion of the HEP's name in error could lead to the research becoming 'unsafe' and the provider prohibiting the content from being used, and the thesis not being submitted. Therefore, care will be taken by the researcher to adhere to the restrictions put in place by the HEP. A final limitation relates to the chosen research method, the case study. The advantages and disadvantages of using this method of research are discussed and analysed later in Chapter 3 Methodology.

1.5 Research questions

It is important to note that the following research questions have been included in this Introduction after careful consideration of the theories studied in the full literature review in Chapter 2.

Research question one (RQ1) – How can a ‘For Profit’ HEP’s strategic decisions to expand and diversify its mode of delivery be understood in the contemporary context of the wider HEI sector?

This question explores the initial consequences of education reform and Government policy for the ‘For Profit’ HEP. It will examine changes within the higher education market and the impact that marketisation has had on the provider and its approach to pedagogic development and delivery.

Research question two (RQ2) – Which factors relating to enrolment do students perceive as important when applying for a course within the ‘For Profit’ HEP?

The question has been developed in order to determine the ‘emotional’ and ‘rational’ choices of students when considering applying for courses in the relatively newly-formed and blended offering of the HEP. A number of factors will be considered and these will include:

- The satisfaction previous students have gained from higher education courses, as well as hearing about success stories;
- Potential relationships between the student and educators;
- Any emotional attachments and the location of the HEP;
- An examination of student rights as posited by Bernstein (2000).

In addition to these factors, the financial implications of the HEP’s fee structure will be examined, which might influence student applications; as well as some analysis of the HEP’s brand recognition and reputation.

Research question three (RQ3) – Does segmentation strategy influence the student recruitment process in the 'For Profit' HEP, if so why?

Being a relatively small HEP the institution does not have the financial capability to target the entire UK student population and consequently it needs to segment and target certain sections of the market. (Due to confidentiality actual financial resources and budgets cannot be used as part of this research.) This question will attempt to explain the influence of segmentation strategies within the organisation and explore alternative segments not currently being used. The challenges and benefits of segmentation will be identified, thus providing opportunities to develop market research activity.

Research question four (RQ4) – Which recruitment strategies are perceived as most effective when attracting students to a 'For Profit' HEP?

The HEP uses a number of methods to attract potential Blended learning students to the institution, which have cost implications associated with them. Understanding this process, as well as informing practitioners about effective strategies for ensuring maximum exposure of the HEP to the target population, also enables a comprehension of the influences there are on potential students' decision-making, regarding the choice of HEP and course.

Recommendations could then be made with respect to both HE recruitment strategy and pedagogic delivery, usefully informing practice in the wider higher educational academic community.

1.6 Introduction to methods

At this introductory point a cursory review will be made of the research methods associated with the study and the research strategy considered briefly. A case study will be used to provide a thorough in-depth analysis of 'marketisation', 'segmentation', 'student recruitment', and 'marketing communications'. As Zainal (2007) explains, case studies provide an in-depth and holistic explanation of complex issues in a concrete environment.

Data will be obtained from the targeted HEP to examine the following:

- Segmentation strategy used within the recruitment process;

- Justification for the current marketing communication strategy, updates and amendments based on evidence and feedback from market research.

These approaches will contribute towards answering **RQ2, RQ3 and RQ4**. Lopez (2013) argues that there are many benefits of using existing data. These include accessibility to institutional data and trends and generating new insights.

Primary data will be collected and a mixed approach to this data collection will be used. Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007), find that the mixed method approach is the third recognised research approach along with qualitative and quantitative research. There will be interviews with the management of the University. Justification for selecting the sample of participants will be explained in more detail in Chapter 3.

Each interview will take an in-depth approach and explore ideas relating to answering **RQ1, RQ3 and RQ4**. Harrell and Bradley (2009) identify a number of benefits when conducting interviews. They suggest that unstructured questions enable further probing of topics, ideas and concepts, thus creating ease for the participant to respond and for the researcher to gain further informative data. When commencing the interviews, it will be useful to establish the rationale for the predominantly online University's change in strategy, that is, moving into 'on-campus' teaching, and thus offering a 'Blended' approach to courses. Identifying the causes and effects of strategic change within the University will provide a basis for understanding why the decision for Blended learning has been taken. A review of macro and micro factors will be considered as influencers in this regard.

The interviews will also provide analysis of the choice of segmentation as a strategy and how this was established through market research activity. The recruitment strategy will be assessed in order to determine the case study HEP's capabilities with respect to coping with applications for a blended educational environment. Marketing communication activity will also be appraised to determine the usefulness of various communication strategies and the decisions being made in terms of integrated marketing communications to targeted student areas.

Finally, a survey will be issued to on-campus students to answer **RQ2 and RQ4**. The distribution method will be via SurveyMonkey online. This method will hopefully acquire useful data with respect to the students' rational and emotional choices when enrolling with the University. It will also provide some clarity with regards to those marketing communications that most effectively attract students to the University, together with student views on the Blended pedagogy. This mix of methods will hopefully enable valuable data to be collected and interpreted and increase the credibility of the research by providing a more holistic picture of the research field.

One issue that arose from submitting this thesis and research proposal was as indicated earlier, confidentiality. When seeking approval from the university it was agreed by the university's research committee that the institution would remain anonymous. The main reason for this is that the HEP is a profit-making provider and thus wants to remain competitive without sharing ideas and strategies with other private for-profit degree awarding universities. Therefore, as a prerequisite of the study, the researcher will adhere to this request and refer to the HEI as either the For-Profit HEP, the chosen HEP or simply the university. This will not only protect the provider's name, but also the researcher's work and ensure that complications will not occur upon submission. Whilst confidentiality is not a legal obligation, it is expected to be respected. The British Educational Research Association (BERA) and The British Psychological Society (BPS) stress the importance of maintaining confidentiality unless situations arise when confidentiality needs to be breached. In these circumstances participants will be informed. It is envisaged that this research will not create any circumstances or events in which confidentiality will be questionable and breached.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

The structure of the Thesis will be as follows:

Chapter 1 will introduce the research and provide a brief overview of the origins of marketisation, recruitment and marketing communications. The content will then identify the research issues and justify the purpose of the study. The case study HEP will be introduced and some justification will be expressed in order to explain the use of only one organisation. The research questions will be shared and explained at this point. An anticipated original contribution to knowledge will be made clear and the limitations of the research and the parameters of the thesis will be set. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a very brief overview of the intended research methods.

Chapter 2 will discuss and explore marketisation and education reform in more depth. A systematic overview of the relevant literature will be undertaken in order to provide a framework for the research process. Within this section of the thesis, the roles of the students and HEIs will be explored. Initiatives from the HEIs will be considered relating to attracting and recruiting students; and different approaches to recruitment will be assessed. The chapter will continue to look further into marketing communications and those strategies used by HEIs when recruiting students, including segmentation. An evaluation of interested parties and stakeholders will also be made in order to gauge influences on the development of programmes, together with the influence others have on the student's decision-making process. The chapter will end with an analysis of the methods used from the past empirical studies with the intention of informing the current study's research strategy. A conceptual framework will be developed from the review of the literature, and the relevant research questions will be formulated.

Chapter 3 will examine the methodology of the thesis and will explore research philosophy, approach and design. Methods, particularly in relation to the case study approach, will be appraised for their validity and reliability. Sampling techniques will be assessed for their usefulness and limitations. A pilot study will be conducted in order to provide justification for the methods used and the structure of the questions. Ethical issues will be assessed and informed consent will be taken account of. Finally, the approach to data analysis will be considered. Initial discussion will take account of different undertakings and techniques in the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data; for instance the use of SPSS for quantitative data analysis and a thematic approach for qualitative analysis.

Chapter 4 will present and interpret the research findings. This will involve some triangulation of the methods and provide a detailed analysis of both the primary and secondary sources.

Chapter 5 will synthesise the data findings and evaluate their meaning. There will be a link to the original research questions to ensure that each one has been answered. There will also be an attempt to identify similarities and differences regarding earlier literature. Theoretical and practical implications of the thesis will be highlighted. These will specifically focus on the researcher’s original contribution and ‘nudge’ to theory. Finally, there will be some assessment of the limitations of this research and potential future research agendas.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter explores the marketisation of higher education by providing detailed reflections on a number of key themes that are associated with this topic. Initially, consideration will be given to education reform and the changes in the political environment of education. This will include a summary of neoliberalism, a reflection on aspects of Third Way political policies in the UK and a consideration of their impact on HE pedagogy. The benefits, drawbacks, and ethical position of marketisation of higher education will be assessed. Later in the chapter, student recruitment and segmentation will be analysed in order to gain an insight into changes within these processes due to the onset of marketisation. At the end of the chapter, conclusions will be drawn with respect to current research into marketisation, segmentation, and student recruitment. A connection will be made between chapters 2 and 3, leading to the formation of a conceptual framework that will contribute to the development of a research strategy for this study.

The discussion in this review outlines the current development of a ‘market place’ in English education in which higher education institutions (HEIs) and providers (HEPs), such as universities and colleges, compete. I argue that the policy-makers who have pursued a marketisation agenda have failed to consider how pedagogy can be effective within this new world of higher education, thus leaving a ‘black hole’ that institutions must fill as they adapt to such change. This is one of the original contributions to knowledge that this thesis makes. At the end of the chapter, Table 2.3 outlines a number of studies that are particularly relevant to the line of approach to be taken in this research thesis.

2.1 Origins of marketisation and deregulation

This section of the literature review will provide an overview of the development of marketisation and what led to the higher education sector being reformed and deregulated. This is a snap shot in time to provide a general outline of the sector, and is intended to set the scene for the remainder of the research.

2.1.1 Neoliberalism and education reform

As a result of developments within the provision of education the emergence of a notion of ‘competition’ was established. From this evolved the ‘marketing concept’. This suggested that the new focus provided organisations with an incentive and opportunity to look outwards into the external environment in order to identify the needs of the customer. This approach, together with its associated customer-orientated philosophy encouraged the prospect of long term profitability for organisations whose marketing processes were successful. The general themes of this philosophy developed over time and eventually spread to the education sector. The philosophy of marketing has thus evolved over a period of time.

Lancaster and Massingham (2001) suggest four distinctive features in the development of marketing. Firstly, there is the ‘production-orientated view’. Brassington and Pettitt (2000) describe this as the time period when products were produced on the basis that they could be sold. This was particularly prominent between the mid-nineteenth century and up to the 1940s. Fordism, the production processes pioneered by the Ford Motor Company is a dominant model of this period. The company produced one type of car ‘en masse’ and hoped to encourage large-scale customer demands for the product rather than manufacturing a car based on consumer research. Kotler and Keller (2006) identify this type of production and selling in a market where a company wants to expand, as one in which production efficiency is higher as a consequence of costs being kept low. Kotler, (2000) indicates that this type of production can lead to poor quality service as the product is not what the customer is ultimately wanting.

The next phase was the ‘product-orientated view’. The Oxford Dictionary of Business (2002) defines this stage as the consumers’ endeavour to search for products that are made of better quality, features and design. This phase was prominent in the 1950s and 1960s. Lancaster and Massingham (2001) argue that this approach to marketing is based on the view that customers are rational and will choose products that are of a ‘good quality’.

Next came the ‘selling-orientated view’. This view is similar to that of production-orientated organisations, in that organisations produced goods and sold them ‘aggressively’ in the market. According to Newman (1999) this approach is best utilised where products are standardised, for example, selling cans of fizzy drinks or where products are non-standard and harder to sell, for example encyclopaedias. Lancaster and Massingham (2001) argue that the metamorphosis of the selling-orientated view to the ‘marketing-oriented view’ is a result of a process of consumerism, whereby the interests of customer are made the priority. They explain that in the 1950s there was a shift in the attitude of the consumers in the USA brought about largely due to the criticisms of the company General Motors.

The marketing-orientated view (or marketing concept) has now become the main focus of many organisations and industries. Adcock (2000) indicates that this view is formed as organisations come to see customer research as central and satisfying customer needs is paramount in order to remain competitive and profitable. Adcock (2000) also highlights an awareness of the importance of competitors and, therefore, a growing need to monitor activities to remain competitive. Dibb et al. (2012) go further with this view and consider the need to scrutinise external market forces and demand in order to enable organisations to respond to these influencers. Hollensen (2010) argues that developing good relationships with those in the external market such as clients and suppliers is essential in order to help producers focus on retention strategies. Hollensen (2003) alludes to the need to focus on internal relationships within organisations and the development of cross-functional teams to provide the end-user with their desired end-product/services. These teams might include, (although are not restricted to): marketing, production, sales, quality and supply. Over a period of time ‘consumerism’ has become more prevalent within the majority of markets.

Giddens (2004) examines the origins of conservatism as an alternative to social democracy. He indicates that a popular trope of public debate in the media was that the welfare state was propagating a lack of self-reliance and putting limits on personal freedom under Labour Governments. Thatcherism in the 1970s and 1980s built on these views and claimed to understand the nature of economic markets. The view of the Conservative Government under Thatcher was that economic markets if unregulated would thrive and provide benefits for the whole of society. Building on the ideas of Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman, Thatcher and Reagan in the USA, propagated the view that markets flourish best without

Government interference, and only the loosest legal and regulatory frameworks are required to control them, (Gray 1997). This political orientation was described, by its critics in particular, as 'neoliberalism', (although inevitably aspects of what is characterised as neoliberalism were evident to some extent before this period). Neoliberalism advocated 'liberalised' economies and markets, with reductions in Government spending and as little 'interference' as possible. Obviously, neoliberal policies contained some parameters with respect to free markets regulation, but represented a reorientation of the state and state intervention in the economy so as to exercise control differently and in favour of different fractions of capital. This involved a change in the nature of state control, rather than simply operating in a laissez-faire environment without constraints.

Martinez and Garcia (2003) identify a number of fundamental aspects of neoliberalism. These include: firstly, the rule of the market, whereby there is more freedom and the growth of private organisations. Secondly, there is the advocacy of cutting public expenditure, for example, within the education sector. This works in parallel with reductions in some taxes within society. Thirdly, deregulation in central Government controls over private capital occurs to enable private capital to buy into previously public provision. This has resulted in alternative methods of control and monitoring of the education sector; for example, through the introduction of agencies such as the Quality Assurance Agency. Next, there is the advocacy of 'privatisation', whereby, private investors, (including in the education sector), are encouraged. Finally, in a conceptual sense, there is the removal of the term, 'community', and its replacement with 'individual responsibility'. This is designed to encourage individuals within society to see responsibility for their own education, life chances, and job prospects as something they personally shoulder the blame or take the credit for. Over the last two decades, education has seen reform based on neoliberal lines whereby, Government spending has been reduced and public services opened up to private investment. Consequently, the education sector has become part of the environment for private profit making beneficiaries.

There are competing views in the academic community about neoliberalism. Apple (2003) draws attention to the educational reform that has occurred throughout the world and challenges many of the principles of neoliberalism. However, Robertson

(2000) and Hatcher (2003) argue that developed nations, such as the UK and USA have responded well to deregulation, for instance, schools can now adapt to community and individual needs. Whitty, Power and Halpin (1998) develop this argument by noting that neoliberalism can produce greater efficiency and effectiveness within educational institutions. Nonetheless, 'efficiency' can also have unfortunate consequences for an academic curriculum and the wider nature of teaching and learning (Apple 2003).

Within the UK, the Education Reform Act 1988 structured the higher education sector in relation to funding and operations. Interestingly, part of the Act stated directly that higher education corporations are to 'supply goods and services', (HMSO 1998). This fitted in well with the notion of neoliberalism and the prominence of market forces. In contrast to the posited benefits and well-meaning intentions of the Act, Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) argue that the higher education sector was in fact liberalised because of insufficient funds from the Government to maintain it.

Giddens (2004) asserts, from an academic perspective, that neoliberalism is complex. It is argued by Giddens (2004) that the 'Third Way' is a model that attempts to preserve some aspects of community and social justice. According to Martinez and Garcia (2003) the notion of 'collectivism' was considered less prominent under neoliberalism, and in Giddens' (2004) view, Third Way politics, advocated later by Tony Blair, for example, help individuals to deal with the challenges that result from new forms of globalisation, innovation, entrepreneurship and the freedom of markets. Some of the fundamental principles of the Third Way include:

- Equality of opportunity - Individuals have access to facilities, services, products and life chances.
- Protection of the vulnerable - Ensuring that when required, individuals within society are given help. However, the Third Way does not advocate automatic rights to people. They must provide something in return. Giddens (2004) uses unemployment to illustrate this point. The unemployed individual will require financial support, however whilst gaining this support the individual must be committed to searching for employment.

- Freedom of autonomy – It promotes independence, accountability and responsibilities.
- Responsibilities to the individual – The Third Way encourages new relationships between individuals, the community and society.
- Democracy and participation – Authority from those in power is maintained, although participation is encouraged. In other words people can speak out and are listened to.
- Philosophical conservatism – The maintenance of traditions whilst coping gradually with change.

Giddens (2004) argues that the purpose and focus of the Third Way is to offer protection of both liberty and modernity. The population are ideally protected from discrimination and exploitation, and as the private sector becomes more dominant, the Third Way encourages a sense of responsibility to community and the individuals within it. Where power is exercised, the Third Way asserts that this power be sustained through participation with others rather than via the dominance of a few. Dickson (1999) explores Tony Blair's concept of the Third Way. Blair and the Labour party championed it as a way of rationalising their belief that Thatcher-style deregulated markets and privatisation could coexist with social justice. Thus whilst the Labour party encouraged certain elements of marketisation of public services they also pursued the elimination of poverty and disadvantage. One of the central planks of this approach was education policy, as it appeared to simultaneously serve these 'two masters', of increasing social mobility and so tackling poverty and promoting individual as opposed to collective, responsibility.

Wigmore (2015), reports that poorer students in Scotland are being disadvantaged due to borrowing. Although fees have not been implemented in Scotland's universities, students are expected to pay for their own living expenses if they move away from home. It has been recorded that on average some students from poorer economic backgrounds borrow £5750 each year, whereas in England a proportion of students only borrow on average £4047 each year. The discrepancy is due to the more positive and easier access to grants and bursaries within England. So, even though it would appear that Scottish students benefit from paying no fees, in reality this may not always be the case. This is a possible disadvantage of emancipation as it is applied to the higher education sector. This problem does not appear to fit with the Third Way. The White Paper on the future of higher education, (DfES 2003), states that the Government will address the issues of disadvantage for lower and in some respects middle income students through increased grants. However, Wigmore (2015) argues that it would appear that there are still many challenges for students from lower income backgrounds. In other words, it is questionable whether the Government's policies on funding are effective or simply work in progress.

Vught (1989) describes the role of the Government as one that is moving away from having a controlling role to becoming more akin to having a supervisory role through agencies such as the QAA, thus creating opportunities for decentralised decision-making and customisation. This would also appear to be the view of Young (2002), who indicates that marketisation could be considered in the context of a balance between the private sector, academic input and state supervision. Clark (1983) provides a basic triangle diagram to illustrate the shift within the higher education sector as deregulation and neoliberalism enables market forces to enter into education.

Figure 2.1: Changes within the higher education sector, Clark (1983)

The diagram on the left demonstrates the earlier paradigm of education whereby the Government allowed market forces to determine the supply and demand of students. The diagram on the right provides a paradigm highlighting the impact of marketisation on the sector, whereby the sector is influenced not only by the Government and supply and demand, but also by interested parties, such as, businesses. According to Clark (1983), the Government acts as a 'facilitator' of education rather than as a 'controlling power'. The purpose of this is to create competition in order to provide an increase in qualifications demanded by the consumer, one contradiction being that the consumer is in no place to predict whether their qualification is likely to be of the sort to provide them with the outcome they desire. In order to make these, at least superficially, possible the consumer needs to be positioned as a rational actor, able to make decisions and this demands the creation of rankings and benchmarks, league tables and surveys of student experiences. This is a much more complex educational environment, and creates the new contradiction of how to deal with the potential over-supply of graduates resulting in their new position as consumers in this new marketplace. The whole system is driven by central government purchasing power, with no apparent mechanism for limiting their numbers.

Varman, Biswatosh and Per-Skalen (2011) study the effects of neoliberalism within a business school and identify the impact it had on pedagogy and pastoral care. They interviewed 17 second year MBA students to identify their perceptions and experience of ‘neoliberal Governmental subjectivity’, whereby markets are influenced and driven towards entrepreneurial and vocational subjects. The researchers find that the majority of students have been affected by this process, and, as a consequence, their studies and extra curricula activities become focused on developing and refining themselves as being ready for the working environment. The research identifies work placements as being of interest for the majority of respondents, to provide them with experience and some skills development ready for the workplace upon completion. The research also demonstrates that market forces are evident within the business school and students are encouraged from the commencement of their programme to create their C.V. in readiness for placements and employment. Another finding of the research is what the researchers’ term, ‘elitist policies’, whereby the fees for the MBA had risen considerably from the previous year. To students this felt as though they were being pressured into taking loans and then to find employment in order to repay them. They felt driven by market forces to achieve a return on their education; in other words, a return on investment of loans, assuming that upon completion they will be employable. There are of course limitations to the research and these can be found in Table 2.3. Though the sample was very limited, it does appear to fit with other research and, as a consequence should be given some credibility.

Ingleby (2015) focuses on neoliberalism and teaching within the higher education sector. Through focus groups and loosely structured interviews of 20 participants across five HEIs, Ingleby (2015) finds varying perspectives on changes to HE culture. The sample was split into 10 academic staff and 10 students. Generally, the former tend to view the changes within the education sector negatively and disagree with the view that the students are ‘consumers’. In contrast, the students favoured this definition of themselves. This would seem to support the terminology and view posed by the DfES (2003), that students believe in ‘value for money’ when selecting and studying in higher education and perceive such education as providing a readiness for employment. Ashwin, Abbas and McLean (2013), however, found slightly different results when addressing such a discourse and instead found a continuing focus on the quality of education, regarded as being based on the relationship students develop with particular kinds of academic knowledge. Both the tutors and students are in agreement and have a moral objection when it comes to HEIs charging higher tuition fees simply to try to accommodate financial difficulties within the UK economy.

The above research highlights the variations in attitudes in the pursuit of education and that it is a complex and contested area, although some studies clearly show that students often appear to focus their studies on gaining employment through being awarded a ‘good degree’, (Varman, Biswatosh and Per-Skalen (2011)) Morris (2008) presents an interesting debate on the motivations of students and considers the notions of ‘intrinsic’ and ‘extrinsic’ motivators. ‘Intrinsic’ is the drive to succeed from within the person and ‘extrinsic’ a drive to succeed from outside, (in other words through external influencers), (Lines, Marcouse and Martin 2004). Morris (2008) argues that students are being offered incentives to study in order to gain higher grades. The methods to increase grades and the emphasis that is placed on a ‘good degree’ are generally extrinsic motivators, however, intrinsically, it is rather ambiguous as to what the student gains from this narrow definition of education. Morris (2008) puts forward the view that students are trained specifically for examinations rather than experiencing learning for its intrinsic value. Likewise, the tutors in Ingleby’s (2015) study want to develop their students’ minds and encourage them to become more reflective about what they are actually learning.

It can be argued that the DfES (2016) White Paper addresses these motives to some extent. Whilst this paper generally focuses on those in education up to the age of 19, the main themes from the Government can be seen to be reflected across the higher education sector. The DfES (2016) discusses the importance of providing students with their anticipated outcomes through building robust teaching practices. Students will then know what they will learn and the practical employability skills they will be equipped with at the end of their programmes. Delivering value for money with a rigorous pedagogical input is meant to lead to the production of quality educational outputs alongside the progression of students into readiness for the working environment. If Government agendas are to encourage both ‘practical’ outcomes and academic achievement, Morris’s (2008) study raises some interesting questions. Should students be extrinsically incentivised with money or are the outcomes of critical, self-realising education enough? As Morris (2008) argues, extrinsic motivators raise ethical and psychological issues for both students and the HE sector generally. The motives of HEIs might be questioned when recruiting for courses. A consequence of the ‘commercialisation’ of HE may be to make its priority to increase the student headcount, and this agenda can come into conflict with providing quality education.

Davies et al. (2016) also focus on the intrinsic and extrinsic motives of students. Whilst there are some similarities with Morris (2008) and Varman, Biswatosh and Per-Skalen (2011), their study considers cultural factors that significantly impact on student motives and choice within higher education. In a study covering four countries they find that students are motivated by a number of factors (see Table 2.3 for further detail on the methods used to gather data.) Davies et al. (2016) find that students from all four countries share the same motives regarding lifestyle aspirations and developmental skills; the former linking somewhat to extrinsic motives, for instance, a rewarding social life, and the development of skills. In some cases, differences occur between the countries when discussing career outputs, reputation, and the ease of completing the academic programme. Culturally, there are possible reasons for these differences, for example, failure is frowned upon within Chinese culture and therefore ease of course completion may be a motive regarding student choice of institution. Although there are differences among the results from the four countries in terms of career achievement, all four countries placed an importance on this particular variable. Some similarities can be seen with the work of Varman, Biswatosh and Per-Skalen (2011) and Ingleby (2015) where employability and readiness for work are regarded as being essential variables when determining student choice of institution.

The arguments of Datar, Garvin and Cullen (2010), Gross and Hogler (2005), Lowrie (2008), and Lowrie and Wilmott (2009) suggest that the implication of marketisation in contemporary higher education results in less emphasis being placed on personal learning and development and more on practical vocational development and workforce entry. Ingleby's (2015) study highlights how market forces have had a significant impact on higher education with both academic and student groups agreeing that the restructuring of the system exposes possible ethical issues. This suggests that the policy documents informing this context appear to underestimate the complexity of higher education in England. Although a 'market' has been created, there is nothing in the policy documents that recommends how to teach or learn effectively within this context (Ingleby, 2015).

2.1.2 The development of higher education institutions

Harrison-Walker (2010), explains how for a long time educational institutions have reaped the rewards from the baby boomers of the late 1940s through to the 1960s. Since then, the reduction in birth rates and the opening of the education market has led to a 'buyers' market and one which is more volatile.

Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion (2009) argue that HEIs are now considered to be businesses that promote their brand and services. They are seen to compete for students and research. It is argued that the UK Government applies market principles to HEIs, and thus increases competition between public and private providers. Adams (2016) argues that the Government is now promoting 'challenger institutions' that offer alternative and competitive degree fees. The Government has given taught degree awarding powers to start-up institutions in a bid to fast track them and to offer students cheaper degrees. BIS (2016) identifies current problems for new start-up institutions, who tend to face barriers in establishing themselves within the higher education sector. It is assumed that providing alternative means for HEIs to enter the market will contribute towards anticipated improvements in teaching, thus enhancing the students' life chances and their eventual economic contribution to society. However, it can be argued that how such improvements in teaching and pedagogy will be implemented has not been fully considered by BIS. Encouraging more start-ups will also favour the international market and economic growth within the UK. This is in contrast to an earlier action in 2011 when 133 MPs signed a motion to request the Government's intervention to limit for-profit higher education providers. It was deemed by these MPs that alternative providers were a threat to the traditional higher education sector in terms of 'cherry picking' courses to their advantage, (Bloomfield, 2011).

Jongbloed's (2003) work explores marketisation and assesses the influence of Government intervention. This research focuses on the impact of Government intervention in promoting HEIs and attracting their clients which include students and businesses. Within the higher education sector a number of failings have been identified. Beggs et al. (1991) explore the failings of marketisation in higher education. These shortcomings include 'externalities', 'informative-related problems', 'monopolies' and 'power'.

Externalities refer to reducing the amount of private investment in HEIs, which is considered a failing in the education market as more investment contributes positively to society. Hand picking institutions to receive investment can lead to inequalities in others. Information-related problems involve the actual information the students receive about a course together with some indication of their capability of completing it. This is risky when it comes to the allocation of student loans. If students are ill-informed, Government intervention may be required to standardise the information obtained from both the HEI and the student. The decision-making process may be affected if information is not communicated in a clear, concise and coherent manner. The decision of the student can, therefore, follow the notion of bounded rationality in that the student will make a 'rational' decision based on the facts obtained at a specific time (Bartol and Martin 1994). Conversely, it is argued that there can be the occurrence of a rational model of decision-making, where fuller information is gathered prior to making any final decision (Boddy 2008). This approach to the student's decision making process provides the student with 'certainties' when choosing the best option based on economic value; in this instance, student loans and the potential outcomes following the completion of the courses. It is argued that the monopolistic power of a few HEIs within England could skew the prices of courses in their favour, leaving the student and smaller competitors at a disadvantage. This may necessitate Government intervention in order to stop such practices occurring and this once again reveals the complex variables that are present within the marketisation of higher education.

Jongbloed (2003) provides an explanation of the origins of Government intervention and frameworks regarding HEIs and suggests it has standardised the recruitment process in higher education in part. However, there have been some failings by the Government to meet the expectations of students, their parents and businesses. Wolf (1988) emphasises the limitations created by Government interventions such as insufficient quality, performance and innovation. Modularising and deskilling some subjects has led to the popularity of some courses however, to a certain extent, this has impacted on business expectations and employability. Kavanagh and Drennan (2008), for instance, find that graduate skills in accounting are lacking in the following areas: business awareness, ethics, fraud, professionalism and basic accounting. These skills are largely those that would be expected to be covered within an accounting degree. They suggest that employers want graduates to be more 'job ready' but in reality they are not necessarily evidencing these important skills.

Weimer and Wining (1999) explore the deregulation of HEIs and privatisation as a result of a policy belief in 'free markets'. The focus on deregulation was to ideally provide students with more opportunities to select an institution suitable to their needs and to liberalise higher education. Dill and Teixeria (2000) argue that the benefits of deregulation lie in encouraging innovation and new developments in services and products. However, Molesworth, Scullion and Nixon (2011) argue that in order for the higher education market to be a 'pure' market it would need the following:

- HEIs to possess legal autonomy, free from external control;
- Deregulation of market entry to encourage for profit institutions to enter the market and thus raise competition;
- No parameters set on tuition fees, capping or enrolments;

- The cost of fees to be covered by the students and families, rather than from any interventions and schemes set through taxpayers' money;
- Users to be given freedom to choose what they study, where, and how, all based on price, subject and providers of the HEI programmes.

Whilst in principle this 'utopia' of a pure market may be appealing to some interested parties, according to Molesworth, Scullion and Nixon (2011) it can never exist in reality. Consequently, there are limitations in the education sector and, therefore, a 'hybrid' model exists in order to satisfy a range of stakeholders. The role of the state, as Giddens (2004) suggests, in a hybrid model becomes that of a guarantor of access and provision for the more socially vulnerable, to enable access for all to HEIs rather than to supply education only to the more affluent. Entry to the education sector, however, is not entirely deregulated. This is largely due to HEIs being specifically required to offer knowledge in readiness for the work environment. Benchmarks exist to ensure that these are appropriate and relevant to industry skill sets and professions. There are issues surrounding quality of teaching and pedagogical approaches and in consequence, HEIs are regulated by independent institutions such as the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) who report on standards to the Government. Internally, HEIs are also self-governing alongside the input of external examiners. The audits conducted on quality assurance are designed to protect a range of stakeholders. These include the student, staff and HEIs. I argue that these factors can have a significant impact on the student's choice of study and location.

2.1.3 Marketisation – Benefits, Drawbacks and Ethical Position in Higher Education

Onderwijsraad (2001) argues that eight principles underpin the onset of marketisation within the higher education sector. The first of these involves freedom of entry, which leads to more competition between educational organisations, thus enhancing educational choice for the student. The market is now comprised of both public and private higher education institutions. The second principle involves freedom to specify the supply of programmes and this has led to institutions having the ability to react more quickly to the market and provide what students and employers demand. Consequently, programmes and qualifications should be focused on these demands. As an example taken from the case study provider, this is evident in their business degrees offering innovation and entrepreneurial options. Institutions attempt to build relationships with employers in order to understand the skills required to operate within certain sectors.

At this stage, it is important to point out that the higher education provider (HEP) being researched does have links to the business environment and has developed a range of graduate attributes that relate to that environment and the appropriate learning outcomes for modules. One such example of an attribute is *"Responsible Global Citizenship: Understand global issues and their place in a globalised economy, ethical decision-making and accountability. Adopt self-awareness, openness and sensitivity to diversity in culture"* (Johnson 2015). This programme and learning outcome/attribute was developed through consultation with businesses and consequently students are now required to demonstrate this skill through their summative assessment on particular modules. One of these, for example, is 'Sustainability', a module which is part of the MSc in Engineering.

Onderwijsraad's (2001), third principle is freedom to use available resources. This includes not only the institutional resources, but also the information obtained from other students. The quality of peers can in some cases enhance student learning. Freedom to use available resources is a benefit to educational institutions, as suggested by Arnott, Bullock and Thomas (1992), although this has tended to expand the administrative tasks of the HEIs that are monitoring this. The next principle is the 'freedom to set prices'. The debate on flexible prices remains open to a certain extent. Whilst the benefits of freedom to set prices encourages competitiveness and 'best' pricing for students, there is still an argument for Government intervention to ensure that a cap on maximum fees is applied in order for courses to be accessible to all. This would then allow lower income students reasonable entry to HEIs. Coughlan (2018), reports that the current Conservative Government will review the setting of prices and the fees structure. It is argued that the £9250 cap set as a maximum has failed to provide sufficient competitive pricing structures, as many universities charge close to this maximum. This is leading to high student debt and significant repayments in later life. The

Conservative Government's outline of the review includes a potential lowering of interest repayment rates; reviewing the levels of fees; reintroducing maintenance grants for less affluent students; and creating an innovative delivery of degrees, (for example, 'commuter degrees'), whereby students live from home and have the flexibility to still work part time whilst studying.

The fifth principle is 'freedom to choose a suitable provider'. This enables a student to select the most appropriate HEI. In reality, however, there are parameters set for most students. These include: cost, number of places available, travel, and accommodation. As touched on by Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992), these factors will be considered in more detail as the chapter progresses. Institutional entry qualifications are regarded as being a further limitation on student choice.

A further principle is the freedom to choose the product. It is argued that in order to remain competitive, HEIs need to develop and offer a range of courses, (i.e. products), that are attractive to the students. After research undertaken in one HEP, Johnson (2015) provides the following findings about the requirements of businesses in the English Midlands. Johnson (2015) states that a graduate attribute that would feed into effective programme development is, *"Discipline Expertise: Knowledge and understanding of a chosen field. Possess a range of skills to operate within this sector; have a keen awareness of current developments in working practice, and being well positioned to respond to change"*. This attribute provides a clear indication to potential students of the benefits of selecting more competency-based and pragmatic courses, where students are given the opportunity to apply what they have learned in practice.

It is argued that student consumers can now gain adequate information as a result of the new forms of state deregulation and marketisation. Such consumers strive to know more about the price of programmes and the quality of service prior to engaging with a HEI. Quality of service is an important aspect to consider within education. As an intangible service, the outcomes that HEIs offer can be perceived differently by different individuals and this can make it difficult to measure quality and success (Randall 1996).

A seventh principle is that HEIs must ensure that they communicate informative detail in terms of the benefits of the institution, accurate information, and promote the quality of services and facilities provided. As Vossemsteyn (2002) suggests, all this is based on the assumption that students think rationally about their choice of HEI as they gather all of the facts. An eighth and final principle is that cost-covering prices are paid direct. This is determined by the extent of Government involvement and the subsidies the Government is willing to invest in the student's education. This is assessed through examining the social benefits and value of the student's education with respect to employability and society, a point also made by Molesworth, Scullion and Nixon (2011).

Foskett and Hemsley-Brown (2001) explore consumer behaviour and student choice by examining the long term implications for individual institutions. Baldwin and James (2000) emphasise the importance of understanding student choice and the influence of market forces. They assume that students will make rational decisions in terms of enrolment to a HEI and suggest that, if this is the case, knowledge of this rationale should enable HEIs to modify and develop their recruitment strategies, all of which is explored in this thesis.

By the 1990s HEIs understood the importance of retention and the importance of maintaining long term contact with students. By the mid-2000s, according to Sauer and O'Donnell (2006), student retention was factored into HEIs' recruitment strategies. This in turn led to an emphasis being placed on making apparent the benefits of degree programmes to students prior to them enrolling on courses. It is argued that the resultant impact led to greater retention and reduced student drop-out rates. As a consequence, the development of 'relationship-marketing' between the institution and student became apparent. As Anderson and Mittal (2000), and Reichheld (1996) confirm, retaining a current customer is more cost effective than customer acquisition.

2.1.4 Pedagogy and marketisation

Bernstein (2000) explores the concepts of democracy and pedagogic rights within education, and it is argued that one of the minimum conditions for the existence of democracy is the presence of specific rights. According to Bernstein (2000), pedagogic rights are established through students and parents, having 'stakes' and confidence in the educational institution. ‘Stakes’ in this instance are defined as the contributions and benefits provided by the institution and the operation of a type of reciprocity and justice in the relationship between what the institution provides and the complementary inputs given by the student and parents. What is interesting about Bernstein’s (2000) work is the link between the individual, the institution, society and inequality. Bernstein’s (2000) research presents three main rights that students should have within the education system. Bernstein describes these rights as: ‘enhancement’, ‘participation’ and ‘inclusion’. Through these three rights, students are able to gain experience and skills for their personal development. ‘Enhancement’ enables an individual to develop personally, both socially and mentally, leading to greater confidence. ‘Participation’ provides a platform for students to be personally involved in institutional activities, in a democratic fashion, thus forming a relationship of reciprocity between the student and the institution. Finally, ‘inclusion’ allows for autonomy and freedom for students to develop socially, intellectually, personally and culturally. Bernstein (2000) suggests that these rights can only truly be put into practice if inequalities within the education sector are eradicated. This is challenging as society is unequal and this influences the education sector.

With respect to these three rights, Bernstein (2000) argues that institutions respond in the following ways: firstly, they have to share with their students the institution’s image and ideology of education such as aspirations to succeed, together with the encouragement of student inclusion and participation. However, there are negative aspects associated with sharing images and ideology. For example, the HEI may include only those positive aspects that the institution wants to showcase, together with the use of manipulative language, the format of which may be in restrictive (limited) or in elaborate (extended) code. Bernstein (2000) discusses the use of language and identifies inequalities in the use of linguistic codes. It is argued that the ‘lower classes’ generally use the restrictive code, thus limiting their understanding, growth and development when they enter into education. In contrast to this, Bernstein reflects on the social backgrounds of the ‘middle classes’, and their preparation for education. It is argued that this social group tends to equip its children with the skills of language in readiness to enter into the learning environment.

Bernstein (2000) also reveals the occurrence of the emergence of an unequal distribution of knowledge, and that this depends on where the individual is placed within social groups in society. Stereotypes and labelling can lead to some groups being proportionally less well off in terms of knowledge transfer and self-fulfilling prophecies. With respect to the allocation of resources, inequalities can again be identified due to social stratification and divisions within society. It is argued that an equality of access to education is essential in order to ensure effective education provision and teaching. Bernstein (2000) argues that due to the way in which schools operate to distribute opportunity and knowledge in a differential way, they serve to reproduce inequalities within wider society, whilst believing in themselves as doing the opposite. In consequence, the aforementioned three rights cannot be provided for all students. This becomes an issue when it comes to marketisation in education as autonomy within the sector should allow for greater freedom of choice, (Onderwijsradd 2001). However, because of the above inequalities, such autonomy is more inevitably limited for some lower, socially disadvantaged groups who have been systematically further disadvantaged by the very school system that suggests it is supposedly trying to raise them out of their social situation; what Bernstein calls the 'mythological discourse' of education (2000, p.xxiii).

In order to rationalise inequalities of power and social class within the macro environment, Bernstein (2000) draws attention to the importance of what was previously referred to as 'mythological discourse', whereby schools and other educational institutions can distance themselves internally from external injustice. Bernstein (2000) develops a concept of 'horizontal solidarities', whereby educational institutions produce a united and integrated national awareness, or, to use Bernstein's term, a 'consciousness'. This then becomes impinged into the culture of the institution, and moves beyond external social and power struggles and differences. If injustices still remain then this has a detrimental effect on pedagogic rights. All this suggests that there may be discord between marketisation and pedagogy in reality. Moreover, the policy-makers in England who have supported the development of the marketisation of higher education appear to be utterly unaware of the sociological theory of Bernstein (2000). Has this created a recipe of educational disaster in 2019?

Facer (2011) discusses diversity and inequalities in a similar way to Bernstein's (2000) concept of 'horizontal solidarities' and reflects on the uniqueness that individuals can bring to education by creating social networks and togetherness. This can enable students to gain greater access to knowledge and resources, through peer support, however the work of Facer (2011), like Bernstein (2000) reveals the complex variables within education. This theme of complexity is developed by Apple (1995), who focuses on power and education. The research explores inequalities within education and the state. Apple (1995) reveals the profound nature of education in institutions and warns against making simplistic assumptions about the curriculum. Apple (1995) also comments on the skilling and deskilling of students. It is argued that as society encourages greater productivity within the workplace, this is reflected within the curriculum both overtly and covertly. Apple (1995) argues that criticality and questioning of concepts is less prominent within societies as pedagogic activities are being broken down into 'smaller' and 'simplified' parts. According to Apple (1995), this approach to education tends to replicate practices within the workplace and lends itself to a Taylorist approach and Weberian bureaucracy, whereby activities are selected and broken down to transfer knowledge, ensuring that competence in students is built into a specialism (Armstong 2012, Bartol and Martin 1994). Apple (1995) argues that this has led to late modern education becoming portrayed as offering fewer opportunities for complex questions and profound reflection. Once more, Apple (1995) is revealing the complexity of education. In this thesis I wish to explore the consequences of the marketisation of higher education in view of the complex nature of education.

Bernstein's (2000) emphasis is on ensuring that pedagogic activities are effective in communicating knowledge to students. In this respect he refers to the term 'the pedagogic device'. This 'device' determines when and how knowledge is transferred and to whom. Bernstein (2000) defines the pedagogic device, as the collection of processes and procedures that enable knowledge to be transferred to the classroom, curriculum and online communication. The device comes under a number of influences including the Government, society, as well as the educational institution concerned. The pedagogic device can also assess degrees of autonomy from traditional and progressive education, to vocational and competency based education. The former is controlled more by the institution and the latter is controlled externally, for instance, by the Government and businesses. As Barrett (2012) infers when reviewing theorists of educational reform, teachers become unsure of what to teach. In a similar way, students can become uncertain of what knowledge to acquire.

Bernstein (2000) criticises marketisation and sees inequalities within it, particularly as the market encourages competition and pricing structures that may exclude some individuals and social groups from receiving an education. Moore (2013) commends the work of Bernstein and suggests that this work allows sociologists and educationalists the time to consider their pedagogical approaches in a changing and expanding world. Tomlinson (2013) draws attention to the influence that marketisation has had on social inclusion, for instance, by providing greater access for students to HEIs and funding. Leathwood (2006), however, urges caution with respect to this argument and explains how social disparities can still exist due to students' initial educational experiences and socialisation.

Boronski and Hassan (2015) discuss the changing perspectives of the education system due to reform. This research finds that changes in pedagogy are linked to the falling standards in education that occurred in the UK in the 1980s and 1990s. Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of Education in the 1980s, argued for change and encouraged teaching to focus more on technical, vocational and basic skills rather than on traditional subjects of philosophy and history. Curricula started to change in reaction to changes in the economy. This was influenced by a number of stakeholders such as trade unions, politicians, and business leaders. Whiteside et al. (1992) describe the change as being promoted by a 'loose alliance' of influential business groups. Krug (1969) argues that issues can arise from vocational curricula as students are encouraged to pursue vocational courses supposedly suited to their social background and ability. This lessens the opportunity for the student to develop as their options are limited and they may be grouped into vocations expected for them rather than providing the student with freedom of choice. Consequently, as Bernstein (2000) suggests, students' rights are thereby hindered.

This section has highlighted some of the contradictions within the education system and reveals the complexity of the education systems of our HEIs. The research reveals how inequalities may be transformed, but also reproduced as a result of marketisation. A major element of the marketisation process was the so-called Third Way thinking, which, in theory, aimed to utilise education and the dynamism of the private sector to provide greater opportunity, whilst ensuring the disadvantaged were protected from discrimination. The marketisation of education, as Onderwijsraad (2001) suggests, was supposed to provide opportunities for the majority of those wanting to enhance their skills and knowledge and, as Tony Blair, promised, provide greater social mobility. Whether or not this has ever happened is extremely debatable, and as I have argued, the policy-makers appear to underestimate the complex nature of education systems.

2.1.5 Section summary

This section of the literature review has outlined the development of marketisation over a period of time. Due to globalisation and external factors (explored below), there has been a dramatic change in political and economic policies. The move away from social democracy in favour of neoliberalism and the emancipation of markets has provided opportunities for businesses to develop innovation and self-sufficiency, as well as profitability, in previously public areas of social life. Reductions in public expenditure have helped to drive sympathetic changes to public services, including the education system, leading to a transformed environment for HEIs, which now includes competition from private, profit-making HE organisations. This has led firstly to the opening up of HE to wider social groups, but also to a potentially very different Higher Education experience for all.

Whilst the Government still retains supervision of the higher education sector through formalising articles contained within the Education Reform Act 1988, and White Papers, HEIs have been given greater power in terms of sourcing finance. Businesses have become stakeholders in HEIs. As a result, their funding of research, (for example, GlaxoSmithKline in the pharmaceuticals industry), and their contribution to the development of programmes (for example, Jaguar Land Rover in the engineering industry), has been crucial in enabling HEIs to compete for students. This trend was supported by the Government in its 2003 White

Paper, DfES (2003). The market now contains both public and profit making organisations who are all competing for national and international students. To remain competitive HEIs and HEPs need to focus on developing marketing strategies to recruit students into their institutions. Maringe and Foskett (2002) indicate that the strategic objective of the higher education sector now needs to be the integration of the marketing function as part of the strategic planning process.

2.2 Marketisation within the higher education sector

In this section, consideration is given to student and institutional roles in the context of marketisation in the HE sector. Additionally, there is also an explanation of the justification of 'market-led' strategies. Student perceptions of HEIs, together with the factors influencing student choice are also investigated.

2.2.1 Marketisation and higher educational responses

Jongbloed (2003) did not narrow the scope of marketisation to one single market. His research shows the existence of multiple HEI markets. These include undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral students, a market for graduates and a market for company training. Conway, MacKay and Yorke (1994) provide an interesting perspective on the influence of marketisation in the HE sector and identify two perceptions of the student. Firstly, the student is seen by institutions as the 'customer', and secondly, as a 'product' for an employer, in the sense that HEIs appear to 'mould' students to be ready for the work environment (Varman, Biswatosh and Per-Skalen, 2011). Conway's view on the student as the 'product' of HE is also mentioned in the work of Kotler and Fox (1985).

Nicholls et al. (1995), and Mazzarol (1998) argue that HEIs do not offer products but instead focus on education as providing a 'service'. The intention of this perception of education is that HEIs want to feel part of the business world and interact as such. They need to find their place within the market and consequently develop programmes to service both the student and the wider environment of work. Ng and Forbes (2009) offer another perspective, that of the buyers' market involving 'student consumerism', whereby the student must appear to be satisfied by the HEI. According to Richardson, Nwankwo and Richarson (1995), it is widely accepted that the higher education environment has now become increasingly competitive. There are more suppliers of education with a finite number of domestic students to fill places.

Marketisation has had a ripple effect throughout the world and because of globalisation, markets have become more accessible for students to enter into and select their programme of study. Pimpa (2003) reports that more than 1.6 million students opt to study outside of their own country. Liu (2009) explains how the impact of Western marketisation within the higher education sector has had an impact on the Chinese market whereby, in order for HEIs within China to remain competitive, they take on a more ‘corporate management’ approach to the institution and its operations. Part of this approach includes a market-driven plan in order to recruit and retain the student population. Liu (2009) argues that many HEIs need to focus their curricula on market needs. Meadmore (1998) suggests that there has been a shift from the traditional seller market within HEIs to a buyers-market. Thus, HEIs have moved from being ‘provider-centred’ to ‘student/client-centred’ institutions, thereby encouraging the need to take an ‘outside-in approach’ to the market.

Jarvis (2001) argues that the 21st Century has seen universities becoming part of a ‘higher learning industry’ within a global marketplace. In this context, Allen and Shen (1999) suggest some negative effects of tuition fees on enrolment. Their study was longitudinal and considered enrolment, pricing, family income and competition. It concluded that income and competition have an impact on pricing structures and enrolment within private providers. As a consequence the providers need to do more to provide financial subsidies and scholarships.

Hatfield and Taylor (1998) support the idea of institutions becoming more consumer-driven, rather than product-driven. They foresee the need for HEIs to change their approach to students due to increased competition from distance learning and private-sector alternatives. The focus of the research is on ensuring that business schools within HEIs engage with student needs, a concept discussed later in the chapter. Hatfield and Taylor (1998) take a case study approach, focusing on the feedback gained from the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) review. There were some limitations of the study and these are addressed in Table 2.3 below. This research suggests, (in line with the previous literature already covered in this chapter), that business schools need to meet changing customers' needs and in so doing plan strategically for this and develop their curricula by working in partnership with students. This would appear to be supported by Armstong (2000) and Liu (2009). Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion (2009), Naidoo and Jamieson (2005) and Potts (2005) support the changing perspectives of the student, as the customer, as key to the development of delivery. They allude to consequent student behavioural changes arising from marketisation. The researchers' findings identify a surge in marketisation and competition as leading to students to be of the opinion that they are 'owed' a degree and that it is their right. This places pressure on the HEI to deliver and meet these expectations.

Danjuma and Rasli (2012) provide insights into innovative practices used by HEIs to improve competitiveness within the market place. The focus on innovation in service delivery within HEIs is an outcome of the internalisation of education and global competition between HEIs. Consequently, HEIs must respond to customer needs by improving their existing offer and provide new offers to attract new groups of customers.

Jongbloed (2003) explains how marketisation has led to innovation within teaching and learning. The Open University (OU) is a good example of this. Blumenstyk (1999) Palattella (1998) explore the offering of the OU and highlight its alternative model of multimedia courses. The use of integrated multimedia elements has become more popular within HEIs. Even conventional campus based institutions use platforms such as Blackboard and Moodle.

Jongbloed (2003) also sets out the benefits that students and institutions can gain from cost-benefit analysis. For instance, is it cost-beneficial to enrol with a UK HEI full time that is low down on the university ranking indicator? Would it be more beneficial to take more in terms of student loans and opt for a better performing institution? Such rankings have opened up competition within the sector and this has led to freedom of movement and choice. Care needs to be taken, however, when assessing league tables, as Molesworth, Scullion and Nixon (2011) indicate. League tables are proliferating rapidly and consequently students can assess the performance and categories of results prior to the selection of an HEI. The more expensive and high ranking HEI may not be the best suited for every student, plus students may not qualify to enter into these institutions. Jones and Sasser (1995) conducted their own study into the cost-benefit analysis and determined what constituted a 'profitable customer'. Using their terminology they referred to the 'right customer' and 'wrong customer', the former being able to be recruited and retained. Woo and Fock (2004) also emphasise the importance of selecting the right customer (or student) and advise that 'at risk' students can be retrieved. However, 'wrong customers' need to be divested. At risk students are those students who are satisfied overall with the HEI but show some dissatisfaction with the product or service. It is thought that at risk students can be recouped and so need to be focused upon. Harrison-Walker (2010), Fredericks and Salter (1998) point out the danger of the at risk student moving to another provider. They suggest that institutions could place great emphasis and resources on monitoring these students in order to understand how their custom might be recovered.

2.2.2 Country as a place of study

Morrish and Lee (2011) discuss 'country' as providing a possible sustainable competitive advantage for HEIs. As markets have become more open, this research is aimed at understanding the motives of Chinese students selecting a country for study. 'Country of origin' is not a new term. It has been applied to a range of industries, for instance, German Cars and Swiss Watches. The notion of the 'cosmopolitan consumer' has been widely acknowledged by a number of academics. This type of consumer sees no national boundaries when purchasing products and services. (Cannon and Yaprak, 2002, Caldwell, Blackwell and Tulloch. 2006, Cleveland et al.. 2009, Rogers 2004, Terasaki 2016). Country of study is therefore an important factor to consider.

There are numerous studies based on choice of study and country of study, including those of, Cubillo, Sanchez and Cervino (2006), Gertner (2011), Mazzarol and Soutar (2002), and Srikatanyoo and Gnoth (2002). The latter find that students select a country first and then the institution. Countries are selected largely on their existing reputation. Cubillo, Sanchez and Cervino (2006) argue that students are drawn to a particular country, not only based on its higher education success, but also other factors, such as, the economy, safety and geographic proximity. To an extent, the findings of Morrish and Lee (2011) appear to support the existing research on country of study. Their research finds that Chinese students were more likely to select a developed country such as New Zealand, the UK and USA, as traditionally they all have a good reputation for quality education.

Other defining influencers on student choice include economic factors and language. The majority of students tend to want to improve their English language skills. There are, however, limitations to this research (see Table 2.3). This potentially steers HEI's marketing to focus on the country specifics, as well as the institution, when recruiting international students. On a micro scale, HEIs might focus on geographic location, rather than the country, and the social aspects of living in a certain part of the UK, for example, in 2015 the University of Sunderland presented a televised advertisement attracting students not only to the campus and programmes, but also to the sites and facilities of the city itself.

2.2.3 Student and tutor roles

Joseph and Joseph (1998), and Waimer and Vining (1999) explain how the student has now become perceived as the customer. Armstrong (2000) also asserts that students today are seen as consumers and as such their role within the higher education sector has changed. The researcher focuses on the quality of the educational experience of undergraduate students. Creating value for students is derived through the integration of various functions. These include, (although are not limited to), faculty staff and skills development, among other things

Fromm (1976) argues that students are submissive to external forces in society and this directs their choice of programme towards their future career. Pillay (2004) examines the perceptions of students and finds that they expect the course and curriculum to reflect the skills required within a certain industry. Some students consider attending a university as being an extension of a 'career' service. Grosjean (2004) observes that students' perceptions of vocational courses are that they are an initial entry into an industry, and that they provide an advantage over others pursuing similar employment. However, Beaty, Gibbs and Morgan (1997) indicate that some students do still want to immerse themselves in theory and subject content, together with reflecting and engaging with academia.

Mulya (2019) posits the student-faculty partnership, this role enables the students and faculty to work together, not only on developing vocational skills, but also personal growth and social development. An observation of marketisation is that the motivation of a number of students could have changed to a primary focus on job-related skills. Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion (2009) conclude that students' view a 'good' education today as being based on economic growth, profit and satisfied students-consumers rather than developing pedagogy and reflective practice. There appears to be less inclination to study subjects for their own intrinsic values.

Interestingly, a study by Cardoso, Carvalho and Santiago (2011) brought a different role of the student into view. In one role, the student is seen as an actor seeking information about the HEI and degrees, that is, the student is engaging with HE institutions in the traditional sense. However, these researchers also provide a dichotomous alternative, that of being the 'individualised one'. This is a term very similar to that of the 'consumer' or 'client'. The results of the research indicate two nuances in student perceptions of courses. These are defined as 'tradition' and 'neutral'. The former draws on the role of the actor searching for information on programmes before selecting their degree; and the latter refers to the potential client or consumer, who is rather more pragmatically searching for a 'service'.

Cardoso, Carvalho and Santiago (2011) indicate that the predominant approach of the two is the neutral one. This is where students are drawn to social and economic influencers when it comes to their choices of study programme. In this way, marketisation, they suggest, has transformed the student into perceiving him/herself as the customer. According to Wong and Chiu (2017) the tutor is considered to be the service provider. This provides a contrasting role to that of educator and developer of pedagogical content. Fromm (1976) suggests that the tutor role is more of a mentor, shaping the student to achieve and guiding the student to deliver on his/her expectations. Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion (2009) argue that HEIs also promote teachers not solely as academics, but also experts from industry. This reassures students into believing that they will be acquiring industrial skills.

2.2.4 Brand and loyalty

Yang, Alessandri and Kinsey (2008) suggest that those HEIs that focus on building a relationship with students encourage loyalty and commitment to the HEIs' brands. Management within the HEIs cannot therefore overlook the importance of relationship management and brand development. Hollensen (2010) investigates the notion of 'social marketing' and indicates the importance of this when building loyalty and relationships as the personal welfare of people are taken into account. When contextualised to the higher education sector, this means providing a critical review of marketing theories and practices in the process of identifying the moral obligations of HEIs when attracting students to an institution, such as creating a better and safe student experience, and providing students with accurate and transparent information about the institution. Bowden (2011) develops this study and focuses on the drivers of customer-brand relationships. She identifies four independent variables that link to the dependent variable of customer loyalty. Her study focuses firstly on 'satisfaction'; secondly, 'affective commitment', (that is, the emotional attachment a student has with an institution); thirdly, there is 'calculative commitment', which is a more rational approach to attachment that includes cost, (including fees, living expenses, and switching costs incurred if the student decided to transfer to another institution, (as discussed by Hollensen (2010)). The final independent variable is 'trust', (this is the confidence the student has in the institution).

Morgan and Hunt (1994) stress the importance of trust as a dominant factor in maintaining the student as a customer. Bowden (2011) approaches her study using a cross section of students attending a case study university in Australia. The sample is comprised of 474 participants. It was split into two cohorts. The first cohort consisted of those who Bowden categorised as having a strong relationship with the HEI; and the second, those students who were having a weak relationship with the HEI. Bowden's results showed that there were no differences between the findings of the cohorts with respect to satisfaction and affective commitment as the main determining variables when displaying loyalty to an institution. This is supported by the previous work of Bolton (1998), Gustafsson, Johnson and Roos (2005), Hennig-Thurau, and Gwinnner and Gremler (2002) for satisfaction; and Harrison-Walker (2001), Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner and Gremler (2002), and Hess and Story (2005) for ‘affective commitment’. However, calculative commitment showed a negative result, and trust demonstrated limited impact on loyalty. These results were in contrast to previous studies by Fullerton (2003), Hansen, Sandvik and Selness (2003), Morgan and Hunt (1994), and Rauyruen and Miller (2007) which highlighted the importance of such variables. The results from Bowden’s (2011) study show the importance of understanding the student’s emotional needs. A satisfied student is more likely to build a strong relationship with the HEI and become loyal to the brand in terms of retaining their position as a student at the HEI or returning at a later date.

2.2.5 The marketing mix within marketisation: an introduction

During the 1960s McCarthy developed a marketing model known as the four P’s, that is ‘product’, ‘price’, ‘promotion’ and ‘place’. Since then the model has been used in most industries. Newman and Jahdi (2009) stress the importance of using the model to the advantage of the education sector in that it can be customised and not implemented as a simple blanket approach. These researchers also acknowledge that due to the nature of the education system it is important to adapt to the additional 3 P’s suggested by Booms and Bitner (1981) as cited in Newman and Jahdi (2009). These 3 P’s are ‘people’, ‘process’ and ‘physical evidence’. To further recognise the uniqueness of educational institutions, Newman and Jahdi (2009) developed their ideas and included the C’s, as suggested by Lauterborn (1990), cited in Newman and Jahdi (2009). The C’s are ‘calibre’ or ‘champions’, ‘capabilities’, and ‘charisma’ or ‘collateral’.

Calibre or champions refers to the ‘people’ within the HEI and how they build relationships with the students in order to retain them. To provide a good service to the student, the institution’s staff need to ensure that they demonstrate flexibility when it comes to accommodating each student’s needs, for example, in relation to support offered. Hwang and Choi (2019) find that the relationship that the student has with staff is a significant factor when they assess service quality. A disadvantage of this is the increased workload as there may be less administrative support. Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006) stress the notion of calibre, (people), and so consider the staff member’s role to be one of responsiveness when developing relationships with students.

Capabilities, according to Newman and Jahdi (2009), is quite similar to 'communication'. The HEIs must ensure they deliver an accurate message to students and give students access to appropriate institutional information. The researchers go on to explain that under this concept, HEIs could offer free telephone numbers in order to gain information about applicants, and offer other incentives to enhance student enrolment, for example, IT vouchers. Such measures might help to create a sense of 'added-value' with respect to the attractiveness of the HEI.

Charisma or collateral refer to the 'physical evidence' aspect of the marketing mix. This includes the building and facilities, but also the promotion of the HEI's brand image. In other words, the charisma of the HEI refers to the impression relevant stakeholders have of the institution, its corporate identity, the mix of colour-schemes, words, and designs that the institution communicates visually; together with the brand logo, that is the distinctive graphic symbol for identifying the HEI (Business Dictionary, 2016).

Gajic (2010) explores the elements of the marketing mix and the impact they have on students' experience within an HEI. A sample of 809, (504 first year and 305 second year), students were selected to gather data from within a HEI. This would appear to be a reasonably sized sample from which to gather information, although the study was limited to only one institution, (see Table 2.3). The research findings highlight a number of influencers on the students' perceptions of their experience. 41% of students thought that an efficient teaching process was important; 23% placed an emphasis on the essential elements for promoting the university image; 13% were affected by the quality of learning environment; and 13% were motivated by the possibility of good employment opportunities as a result of studying at the institution.

Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992) focus their research primarily on student accommodation. Using focus groups and a survey, they sought to identify the importance of accommodation and related facilities linked to the physical evidence of the institution. A sample of 253 sixth form students, first year students and final year Masters students were selected to be involved in the research, (see Table 2.3). Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992) argue that there are two important influencers on students' choice and retention at a HEI, these being the relevance of the course and geographic location. These are followed by accommodation. These researchers conclude that this aspect of university life is significant; and quality of accommodation, location of the accommodation, choice of room and access to food are all aspects that students classify as consequential elements that attract students to the institution.

Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992) and Gajic (2012) attempt to link the results to the elements of the marketing mix. The teaching process and course come under product and place. It was concluded that students' choices of HEI are influenced by geographic locations, accommodation, library facilities, student services, career services and access to lecture theatres and classrooms. The pricing element is linked to university fees. As suggested by Kotler and Fox (1985), this is the effective price of the net amount actually paid after financial assistance and other discounts are subtracted. Gajic (2012) suggests that a student's perceptions of price are both psychological and economic, that is 'economic' in terms of what the student can afford and what is considered a reasonable price, and 'psychological' with regards to the emotional attachment the student has to an HEI. These factors were also considered by Bowden (2011).

University image is largely determined by how the HEI chooses to promote itself. Elements of the communication mix are often disseminated through a variety of media, such as advertisements, radio, TV, internet and written materials. Gajic (2010) examines the promotional mix and finds that an important factor that contributes to a successful mix is an understanding of the external environment and various interested parties, not just the student. Gajic (2010), for instance, argues that 72% of students attend a particular HEI because of the recommendation of a friend. The influence of peer review of the institution and peer pressure must therefore not go ignored.

'People' is shown to be an important factor considered by students when selecting their HEI. Both 'internal' and 'external' marketing is crucial in order for students to be given the best possible service. What Gajic (2012) means by this is that the notion of internal marketing tends to motivate staff to deliver the best possible experience for the students. Lewis and Varey (2012) describe internal marketing as employees being internal customers of each other. Consequently they respond in the same manner as when dealing with external customers, thus providing a service to one another that creates a sense of collaboration. This helps to promote motivation. The students in Gajic's (2012) research linked the HEI to employment opportunities. Therefore, internally, staff can prepare to be ready to deliver the best possible teaching experience for students in order to develop skills useful for employment.

External marketing is needed in order to inform applicants and other parties involved in the decision making process, of the benefits of the institution. The importance of recognising all of these influencers on the student is essential to the communication of the right message. Gajic (2010) collects data from students on those parties that influence them. These include self, parents, siblings, cousins and other family and friends. The results show that 63% of students essentially still make their own final decision for HEI application without external influence. Gajic (2012) further stresses the importance of utilising the marketing mix elements in order to recruit and retain students. The higher education sector is driven by services aimed at fulfilling student expectations and satisfaction. These services determine the success of the institution. This also relates to the work of Bowden (2011), when she examines satisfaction and loyalty.

The above research indicates the crucial importance of the marketing mix elements within the higher education sector. In order to attract students to an institution, HEIs must develop these factors in line with stakeholder interests. Such interests not only include the student but also parents, friends and businesses, amongst others. It is through the effective application of the marketing mix elements that HEIs are enabled to be competitive in the HE market.

2.2.6 Section summary

This section has considered further aspects of marketisation. It has explored some responses from HEIs to marketisation and has highlighted the significance that country of study has had since globalisation and the expanded accessibility of higher education. The role of the student and tutor has been defined; relationship management has been considered; and, finally, some focus has been given to the marketing mix. This latter however is simply an introduction and will be considered in more detail as the chapter progresses.

As a consequence of marketisation and increased competition, HEIs are under pressure to develop systematic strategies in order to recruit and retain students. Loyalty, as defined by the Oxford Dictionary (2016), is the feeling of commitment and allegiance. It is therefore important for HEIs to focus on this and the aforementioned research provides some of the indicators HEIs need to be aware of when attempting to build relationships with others. Bowden (2011), Bolton (1998), Gustafsson, Johnson and Roos (2005), Hennig-Thurau, Gwinnner and Gremler (2002) , Harrison-Walker (2001), Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner and Gremler (2002), Hess and Story (2005), Fullerton (2003), Hansen, Sandvik and Selness (2003), Morgan and Hunt (1994), Rauyruen and Miller (2007), and Yang, Alexssandri and Kinsey (2008), all provide helpful evidence relating to building relationships, brand images and loyalty. Thus, the findings from these studies are useful to HEIs. A question that can be posed: is, are HEIs currently aware of the social and psychological aspects of building loyalty and not just concentrating on the economic aspects of their educational provision? This question will be pursued further in the for-profit private higher education sector. As profit-making organisations, these institutions need to be informed of potential strategies that could increase their student numbers and any consequent revenue, and not only the funding opportunities provided from public tenders.

2.3 Disadvantages and ethical issues of marketisation

The following critique of the literature will outline some of the disadvantages of marketisation and the associated ethical considerations. Whilst some of these factors may have already been considered to a degree, this particular section will attempt to develop the topic further.

2.3.1 Disadvantages of marketisation

Redding (2005) argues that calling the student a ‘customer’ can evoke negative connotations. Harrison-Walker (2010) identifies the so-called ‘wrong’ customer, for instance as having a potentially negative impact on the potentially ‘right’ customer. In other words, students who are not impressed with the HEI might share their dissatisfaction with other prospective applicants. This could influence negatively the recruitment of very suitable applicants to the institutions if they were to be swayed by the word of mouth of unimpressed others. Driscoll and Wicks (1998) highlight the issues of ‘quality’ since the higher education sector has become more competitive. Quality may be diminished if institutions are pursuing only a strategy of expansion. The programme that may be acceptable in the short term may be damaging for long term sustainability if it is poorly delivered. This argument is supported from an earlier study conducted by Fiske (1979). An additional adverse effect on quality can be the pressure to increase student footfall regardless of whether or not students are entering courses unsuited to them. Introducing courses in response to employers’ specific needs tends to hamper quality in some cases, particularly if there is a lack of industrial experience and skill amongst the staff within the HEI.

Another contentious issue of marketisation is prioritising students and showing preferential treatment between segments. Those who are deemed not required or unsuitable to apply for positions are sometimes discouraged from applying for HEIs. This is sometimes known as ‘demarketing’, (Kotler and Levy, 1971). Whilst marketisation ultimately encourages the establishment of long term relationships with students, demarketing deters certain segments from applying. Kotler and Levy (1971) proceed to identify a number of reasons for this. Social class is one of them. Ranking students and giving them a lower classification can also have a negative bearing on the HEI. If the HEI assumes some students are more valuable in the long term than others, this can impact negatively on the HEI. Such negative impact may be manifested in terms of turnover and poor publicity. With the wide coverage that social media provides today, expressions of dissatisfaction in this way can lead to the spreading of negative word of mouth to many. This can result in loss of student numbers and be detrimental to an HEIs reputation, (Hogan, Lemon and Libai, 2003).

Mills (2007) argues that the universities tend to label the student as the customer more often than other external agencies. This can increase pressure on such HEIs to meet their self-made demands of students or customers. Such increased pressure can make the HEI offer incentives to students such as free gifts. Kewell and Beeby (2003) explore the notion of student behaviour and how the modern student no longer strives to be a scholar. Consequently, HEIs offer to develop student skills in order to help them specifically to gain employment. Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion (2009) argue that there is an increasing acceptance from students that the role of the HEI is short term and does not therefore advocate or need to promote personal development and transition in an individual. Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion (2009) go further in their consideration of higher educational marketisation in higher education and suggest that the student role trends are now firmly embedded in the notion of themselves as 'degree seekers', rather than wanting to learn and acquire pure knowledge for its own sake.

Datar, Garvin and Cullen (2010), Gross and Hogler (2005), Lowrie (2008), and Lowrie and Wilmott (2009) all criticise the impact of marketisation on learning. Their combined research highlights the fundamental issues of a decline in pure learning as programmes move more towards the vocational needs of the student consumer. Burns (2011), as cited in Swain (2011), asserts that students are clear about why they go to university. Their predominant aim is to gain employment once studies are complete. Their view of learning to gain knowledge and insight into theory is not a priority. Students need a clear purpose to learn. Some academics struggle with this view because, traditionally universities prefer to develop their student within a subject and teach him or her to be more reflective rather than overtly pragmatic. Lynch (2006) argues that marketisation leads to the production of commercially orientated professionals. Beretelsen (2008) agrees with this argument and suggests that HEIs are prioritising more vocational programmes to the detriment of the pure search for knowledge itself.

Marketisation is enacted, at least superficially, according to a neo-classical economic model of markets. In other words, the emphasis is on the exchange of goods and services at a cost and, consequently, does not appear to focus on relational engagement. Other authors, for example, Sheth et al. (1988), Vargo and Lusch (2004), and Webster (1992), investigate the importance of this and find that there is still a need to educate HEIs on the importance of building long term relationships. Building long term relationships can help HEIs in developing their pedagogy, programmes, and intakes; for example, through maintaining contacts with Alumni members in order to gain future work placement access or networks to vocational mentors, and encouraging financial contributions towards aiding poorer potential students.

Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006) provide a systematic review of available literature on marketisation. They focus on over 15 empirical studies during the time period, 1992-2004. The significance of the choice of the timeframe commencing in 1992 was that it was the time when reform took place and post-1992 polytechnics became universities. This provides a wider sample from which to gather data, although the research has some limitations, (refer to Table 2.3). These researchers found some failings within HEIs when attempting to attract students to their institutions. These are included in Figure 2.2 below:

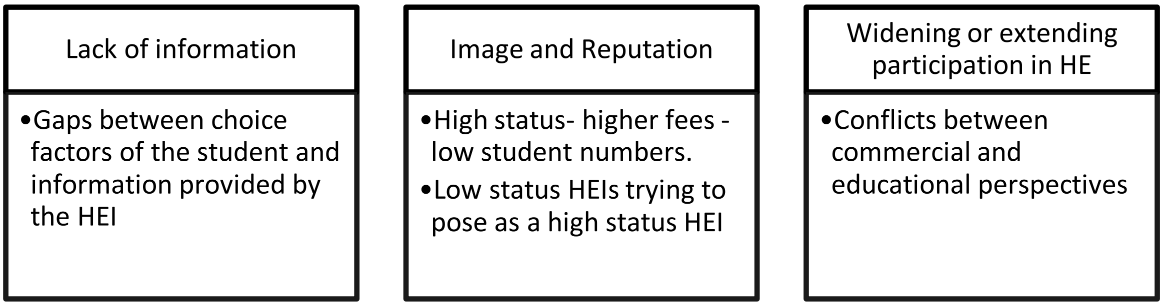

Figure 2.2 Failings in HEIs Watson (2016), (adapted from Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006))

A number of studies, including Hesketh and Knight (1999), Gatfield et al. (1999), Klassen (2002), and Mortimer (1997), all find that students are faced with a lack of information when selecting their choice of HEI. These studies show the limited presence of a marketing-orientated focus. The studies concentrate on both paper information, (such as prospectuses), and the interactivity of the HEIs' websites. Whilst marketisation has provided a platform for students to choose, the latter are limited due to the institutions' lack of experience in communicating their products and facilities. There appear to be discrepancies between what the institutions thought the student demanded in terms of courses and facilities, and what the student actually wanted. Such issues are not resolved according to the studies.

Oplatka (2002) examines Israeli teacher training colleges and public messages from low stratified or low status institutions. Use was made of qualitative content analysis of 66 advertisements of teacher training colleges in Israel. The researcher argues that the messages from the institutions in terms of high academic specialism, professionalism and high university image tended to weaken the brand of the institution. Such results suggest the need for low-stratified institutions to move their marketing campaigns away from attempting to promote themselves as high-stratified or high-status institutions, because students found this contradicted what was found and reported by students in practice. Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006) later argue that negative issues with respect to a HEI's reputation also result from the actions of some high status HEIs. The higher the status of the HEI the higher tuition fee charged, which sometimes results in a lower student headcount. Consequently, high status HEIs are advised to develop their services and facilities to add 'extras' so as to create a greater feeling of value. In reality, however, some high-status HEIs actually reduce the services such as decreasing teaching hours, which could potentially disadvantage a student's progression. Traditional HEIs, it is argued, can no longer rely on reputation alone because of market forces and increased competition.

Farr (2003) examines the concept of 'wider participation'. Government statistics have identified a number of under-represented groups of students within HEIs. Farr (2003) explores this problem by basing his research on these groups and the marketing of communication methods in particular. Issues that Farr (2003) questions are linked to mixed messages from the Government regarding the need for HEIs to target lower represented groups, whilst simultaneously encouraging these institutions to remain competitive and make a profit. Failings in income distribution, which relate to this issue, are examined by Foskett & Hemsley-Brown (2005).

HEIs therefore would be advised to be able to balance social responsibility in the pursuit of student numbers. Pursuing a marketing orientated approach and utilising marketing departments may go some way to establishing priorities and developing effective strategic marketing plans. Maringe and Foskett (2002) recommend HEIs to develop long-term missions and visions that can be integrated into strategic marketing.

2.3.2 Marketisation – ethical views

The following discussion will consider the ethical implications of marketisation within the higher education sector. According to Ferrell et al. (2019 pg.1) ethics refer to “codes, standards of conduct, and compliance systems and typically relate to decisions that can be judged right or wrong”. This section will focus on the need for HEIs to be aware of their moral obligations to stakeholders, such as their students.

There has been a lot of focus on the changing perspectives of higher education and Government interest over the past few decades. Due to marketisation, HEIs are shifting to being market-led and supposedly offering the student a tailored learning experience. There has been a further shift in Government policies since the onset of neoliberalism. This shift has seen a move from higher education simply being controlled with respect to expenditure and budgets, to now being expected to tailor courses and experiences that differentiate one institution from another. Whilst the Government still retains some control in terms of quality and institutional accountability, HEIs have been able to move towards more free market-orientated perspectives whereby the student or customer influences the offerings. This in itself can pose problems. An ethical dilemma for HEIs who may submit to student pressure might offer products and services that please their clients in the short term, but for future, long term employment and reflective development the HEI courses could be lacking quality. Thus, even if the HEI is aware of its moral obligation to stakeholders, it is questionable whether the institution may decide to continue to provide programmes solely for its own revenue gains, as against the long-term development and added value to its students’ journeys into their chosen career paths.

Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion (2009) argue that due to the re-structuring of funding from the Government, together with the shift to a consumer culture based on neoliberal ideology, the higher education system has been transformed. Students quite often pursue their own interest in skills development in order to maximise their future earning potential. Some universities are being encouraged to produce students ‘en masse’ ready to enter into the work environment. As Lingenfelter (2006) indicates, this all takes place at no additional cost to the institution, and yet HEIs are expected to deliver the same quality and expertise despite increased numbers. Bendixen and Jacobsen (2017) acknowledge the challenges that are presented to the marketisation agenda and conclude that even though there may be external influences on institutions, they still need to ensure that quality standards are maintained to satisfy all interested parties.

Natale and Doran (2011) warn about the ‘fast-paced’ turnover of students and recognise the role of the business environment within the process. It is argued that the impact of the business world on HEIs may distort their traditional intrinsic values. Students tend to be required to be more pragmatic in their thinking rather than logical thinkers in pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion (2009) argue that the student is focused only on content which relates to future employment. According to Natale and Doran (2011), education is now considered to be a ‘marketing commodity’ and one that leads to individual profit. Does such a perspective then lead to moral obligations on the HEIs to inform students of the limitations of a course? A further challenge for HEIs is understanding the actual place and methods of pedagogy to either support these views of education or to enhance education in order to maximise the students’ experiences and develop their knowledge with a view to encouraging their lifelong learning.

Kaplan (1996), finds the influence of business and private investment produces further transitions within HEIs that could cause conflict of interest. Academics are often sponsored to carry out research on behalf of organisations. This could be to the detriment of teaching processes that once were the predominant role within the institutions. Nowadays both activities need to take place simultaneously. This relates to the earlier point made by Lingenfelter (2006) with respect to the need to produce more for less. Ek et al. (2013) express concerns that HEIs are focusing on market forces and research rather than the development of the HEIs’ and society’s culture. The researchers suggest that resources are being allocated to corporate research, thus reducing the focus on encouraging certain groups, such as the socially disadvantaged, to access and succeed within HEIs. Yassi et al. (2010), in particular, question the credibility of some research results when researchers are being funded by business corporations. If HEIs become reliant on corporate organisations to fund their institutions then it is questionable as to whether contrasting or controversial opinions and results will be expressed by the academic community. The academics of institutions may come to fear that any such controversial findings that might affect future research funding.

Another ethical dilemma is highlighted by Harris (2005), who assesses the influence that autonomy and freedom have on the role of the academic. As market forces have set out the student as a ‘customer’, student expectations of ‘service’ have increased. Hence, he or she will be influenced to monitor an academic’s performance. Consequently, academics may feel that they are under constant review. Micro observations of their performance come from a range of stakeholders, thus helping to reduce the critical perspectives and views of the academics, who may feel that they have to conform to the expectations of their customers and other interested parties.

Ek et al. (2013) develop an argument for the formation of ‘Academisation’ since the advent of marketisation, whereby the emphasis on more vocational studies has impacted on the academic credibility of the teacher and his or her scientific knowledge. Teachers are now encouraged to either pursue doctoral qualifications and researchers are encouraged to teach. These researchers argue that quality aspects of teaching and experience are placed in danger as the balance between teaching and research sometimes conflict.

2.3.3 Section summary

From the above literature it seems that marketisation does have its contradictions. There are negative aspects relating to moral and ethical issues within HEIs that need to be addressed. Some groups become disadvantaged, whilst other concerns, business ones for instance, are given priority and benefit, according to research carried out by Barker and Graham (1999), Driscoll and Wicks (1998), Ek et al. (2013), Gatfield and Klasson (2002), Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006), Hesketh and Knight (1999), Kotler and Levy (1971), and Mortimer (1997). These authors argue that from an ethical perspective, the effects on the quality of information, courses, and teaching standards are other aspects of marketisation influencers that need to be monitored carefully. Therefore, the relevance and value of courses need to be appraised more closely to ensure they benefit the student and society in general. An even approach between teaching and research needs to be planned within HEIs. Institutions need to allocate resources effectively to accommodate both (Ek et al., 2013). Recruiting ‘en masse’ is questionable for both the institution and student. If students are recruited to unsuitable courses this could impact on them financially, affect them emotionally and limit their life chances. For the HEI this may affect reported dropout rates and funding.

This literature review has attempted to inform research thinking in a number of ways. It has done so in terms of the origins of marketisation, the development of marketisation within higher education; the response of HEIs to marketisation; the issue of studying in other countries; brand and loyalty; definitions of key roles; the marketing mix; and issues of marketisation and its ethical implications.

Overall, marketisation is a key factor in the education sector, and will remain a prominent influencing feature for a long time. Whether marketisation is beneficial or not to the HEI sector and students in general is debatable because the paradigm can be assessed from different perspectives. This literature review has attempted to provide insights into the intensity of market forces and the desire for HEIs to serve and meet the needs of the student consumer and other interested stakeholders. Marketisation has encouraged institutions to be more ‘consumer-led’. One would expect that, as a result, HEIs would have increased their insight into what frames students’ choices of institution and the thinking of other stakeholders, such as the business sector. Some suggest that academia itself is changing, with a decline in learning for its own sake and an increase in vocational courses to develop skills that are easily transferrable to the work environment. This tendency to position graduates as ‘work-ready individuals’ is readily understandable in the context of an overall neoliberal ideology that sees the HEI as an institution supposedly serving wider economic interests. In this battle for hegemony the interests of capital are represented by central government, positioning itself as a vanguard of ‘modernisation’, as the DfE (2018) state, championing the abolition of “outdated attitudes that favour academic over technical qualifications”. The enactment of this ideology comes in the form of a Government review of post 18 Education to examine students’ choices; value for money; and access and skills provision that supposedly provide the skills that employers require.

2.4 Student recruitment

In this section, student recruitment will be examined, including the factors that are involved in planning, communicating and recruiting students. Initially, there will be an overview of approaches to recruitment efforts by HEIs. Student behaviours and attitudes will be investigated in order to understand any influencers on the student regarding choice of HEI. External stakeholders will be considered within the recruitment process, and tactical marketing elements will be explored in order to indicate the factors which attract students to studying within a particular institution.

2.4.1 The competitive environment in student recruitment

Varble and Hawes (2009) explore the student recruitment process within HEIs and find that as a result of marketisation, increased pressure is placed on HEIs to recruit expanding numbers of students in order to gain revenue and remain competitive. They identify consistent marginal increases in student numbers ranging from 1.4% increases to 6%. Due to the change in focus on marketisation in HEIs, the recruitment process has come under increasing scrutiny. It did not appear clear to HEIs which staff should be responsible for the process. Was it the admissions department or the faculties who should be responsible for filling the classrooms? Varble and Hawes (2009) suggest that student recruitment is in fact the responsibility of all. They stress that there needs to be a focus on student recruitment from top management right down to the individual tutors. Whilst the research may not have taken place within the UK, it does provide interesting findings that may be applied to UK-based HEIs.

These researchers highlight a number of shortcomings in the process. These include the misunderstanding of the word ‘recruitment’. According to the Oxford dictionary (2016) the word recruitment is “the action of enlisting new people”. Varble and Hawes (2009) argue that there is an assumption within HEIs that the process of recruitment is considered somewhat contrary to their academic philosophy. Many put forward the view that the very notion of rapid ‘en masse’ recruitment tends to conflict with the traditional perspectives of academia, which sees students recruited for their suitability for the course rather than to ensure speedy recruitment of numerous applicants, quick turnover of enrolment, and consequent increased revenue and growth. This relates to the study by Natale and

Doran (2012) who question such an instrumental approach to recruitment as a response to marketisation. Other failings of recruitment processes within HEIs that Varble and Hawes (2009) identify include: firstly, the lack of experience in mass recruitment. Recruiters need to know where to find students and how to recruit them. Secondly, they point to the presence of minimal accountability and lack of leadership from top management. Naver and Slater (1990) suggest that all functional departments within the HEIs are required to be involved in the process. Finally, recruitment in some institutions is considered as an annual event instead of an ongoing process of quality management requiring the development of recruitment strategies on a continuous basis.

According to Barefoot (2015) companies plan to recruit more graduates. This fact points to the previous discussion on marketisation and employability. In order to fulfil this demand, HEIs must attract, recruit, and retain appropriate students to meet the growing demand of graduate recruits within the market. This is in line with the earlier study conducted by Harrison-Walker (2010), which identifies the so-called right and wrong student.

There has been increased attention to recruiting international students to HEIs. Zigurasard and Law (2006) consider this source of revenue as a competitive advantage and, as a consequence, more HEIs are taking a structured marketing view when attempting to attract the wider global audience and the encouragement of skills migration. There are significant benefits of such international recruitment; firstly, it provides, for the student, the advantage of being able to access a range of global HEIs; secondly, for the HEI, it may lead to increased footfall and revenue. For potential employers, at home and abroad, such recruitment provides students with a vocationally relevant range of skills and knowledge in an international context.

Marzzorol and Souter (2002) suggest a ‘push’ and ‘pull’ strategy with respect to international student recruitment. Push strategies include attempts to increase student perceptions of the perceived enhanced status which may arise from studying abroad. This point relates to the findings of Morrish and Lee (2011), who indicate that Chinese students favour studying in developed countries, such as New Zealand, the UK and USA, because of their reputation for offering quality and superior education. Another push factor that Marzzorol and Souter (2002) identify is the opportunity to study subjects not already provided by the home country, and possibly pursuing migration once graduation is complete. Pull factors include: high reputations of the host country and the HEI, together with the quality of the programmes on offer. Again, both of these factors link up with the findings of Morrish and Lee (2011), which also include valuable host HEI employer contacts, alumni networks, and flexibility in accreditation of prior experiential learning. In contrast to the benefits of international programmes and study, however, there are disadvantages. These include cost, inaccessibility due to language barriers, the need for accommodation, and fear of crime. Whilst there are advantages and disadvantages for both home and international students in terms of place of study some challenges may prove more costly both financially and emotionally for students, as highlighted by Bowden (2011) and Gajic (2012).

Mazzrol and Soutar (2002) also focus on recruiting international students. However, when examining the push/pull factors and challenges, it becomes apparent that such challenges can also be contextualised with respect to the home based student and a particular HEI. Within the UK, students are also met with the challenge of moving away to an institution based on a particular specialism. For example, Cambridge or Edinburgh have a good reputation for specialising in medicine, (The Complete University Guide, 2016). As a consequence, relocating to another area of the UK, regardless of distance, may provide opportunities for graduates to apply for specific graduate training schemes close to a chosen HEI. Relocating to study at the University of Sunderland, for instance, takes students closer to the Nissan plant, especially for those interested in mechanical engineering. (Although, according to The Complete University Guide (2016), it may be better for the student to relocate to Newcastle or Teesside as both universities are higher in the rankings for this subject specialism.) Like foreign students, the negative aspects of relocation also apply to home-based students. Cost of living can still pose problems, as can fear of crime. Malcolm (2010), for example, estimated that the cost of living for students in London was on average £17450 per year as opposed to £14370 for the rest of England. Those students relocating from outside London would, therefore, need to source the additional £3080 per year.

In order to attract students, HEIs must promote both the academic programme and facilities that the institution has to offer. Oliveros et al. (2010) argue that the latter are sometimes omitted from HEIs' publicity and the service element may also be missing. This is because in the recruitment process, HEIs often work in separate functional departments, rather than as a whole. This supports the view of Varble and Hawes (2009). They suggest that for student recruitment to succeed there needs to be engagement from all areas of the institution and at all levels. Ross et al. (2013) examine the so-called 'silo' culture of functions that can endanger the marketing process and recruitment of students. Within each department, a sub-culture is created. Consequently, a specific department may focus on international students, and another on home-based applicants. Again according to Martin (2015), silo effects create rivalry and lack of cohesion. This may impact on communication and unity between areas of the HEI. Lack of communication could mean some services and facilities offered by the HEI may not be made known to every student.

Naver and Slater (1990) presented three dimensions of a marketing-customer orientated approach to student recruitment, as indicated below:

Table 2.1 Three dimensions of a marketing-customer orientated approach to student recruitment, Watson (2016), (adapted from Naver and Slater (1990))

Customer Orientation	This is comprised of understanding the students' needs.
Competition Orientation	HEIs will assess the recruitment strategies of the competitors to develop their own strategies.
Inter-function Co-ordination	As already highlighted by Oliveres et al. (2010) and Ross et al. (2013), this factor focuses on the need to provide unity and collaboration throughout the HEI in order to provide effective student recruitment.

With further reference to inter-functional co-ordination, any focus on this aspect of recruitment suggests the need for a collaborative approach between departmental functions. Naver and Slater (1990) further argue that if one function within an HEI is performing below standard and not meeting student expectations, then this could have an effect on not only the recruitment of the student, but also on student attitudes towards the HEI. Students may let others know of their bad experiences. This could have a negative influence on brand recognition and ultimately deter those wanting to make an application. Bloomsbury Business Library (2007) defines 'recognition' as customers being able to share their experience and knowledge of a brand. A collaborative approach from all HEI functions will offer a transparent and effective recruitment process that could help to enhance the institution's brand and enhance such recognition.

Bush, Ferrell and Thomas (1998), and Stewart (1991), advocate the role of 'marketing orientation' in the student recruitment process. Ross, Grace and Shao (2013) also suggest the influence of marketing orientation and identify a number of benefits for integrating this concept. These benefits include: increased satisfaction, increased retention, and increased market share. This research was conducted in an Australian university in which an online survey was selected as the most appropriate method for data collection. (For limitations of this research refer to Table 2.3.) The findings of the research highlighted the importance of a customer-orientated approach in student recruitment. To be fully effective the inter-functional orientation of staff within the HEI is also crucial in order to maintain a collegiate approach to increasing student numbers and revenue. The success of the latter can be attributed to the sharing of information on market trends, student needs and demands, and resolutions to gaps which may occur between HEIs.

Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014) conducted a literature review of recruitment processes and contextualise this with respect to their institution set in a small rural location lacking local amenities. The researchers posed this locational situation as an issue for the recruitment of students, although some students found this appealing in terms of lack of distraction. Along with this, other issues, such as the economic environment, increased competition, and a fall in high school graduates added to the difficulties in attracting students to the HEI, though low tuition fees provided some competitive advantage for the institution.

Quigley et al. (1999) argue, however, that price is not a prominent factor within the actual recruitment process and that financial implication only becomes apparent once the student has enrolled on a course. This relates also to the findings of Bowden (2011), who suggests that calculative commitment is not a significant factor in choice of institution.

To compensate for the lack of facilities, the HEI in Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez's (2014) research offers over 200 clubs and activities. The main recruitment activities take place over a period of five days on campus. Available recruitment resources and banners, brochures and pamphlets are complemented with presentations from various faculties. The presentations are conducted by both faculty members and current students. The HEI aims to attract the attention of two segments and potential stakeholders; that is, students and their parents. The faculty members focus on discussing the product and services, finances, and future employment with the parents. This approach is in line with the findings of Beggs, Fisher and Dornbush (2008). According to Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014), students are encouraged to 'brag' about the institution and sell the concept to other potential students.

Another method used by faculty members is to write personally to applicants explaining the benefits of the institution. In a focus group conducted with first year students the overall feeling towards this approach was favourable. It was viewed as being very personal and indicated that the HEI cared. Even though most students had access to the internet and social media, they were still receptive to written communications and printed recruitment materials, as indicated by Armstrong and Lumsden (1999).

The general findings of the research found that the open days and printable/written materials contributed to the HEI's increase in student recruitment by 4.29% between the period of 2010-2014. It must be noted that a case study approach was employed and therefore the findings must not be over-generalised, (refer to Table 2.3). These findings are supported by similar studies conducted by Noel-Levitz (2006) and Elliot and Healy (2001). Both studies suggest that the student-centred and campus-centred approaches to be most successful and beneficial in the recruitment process.

Blackman's (2006) research explores the views of graduating students and their responses to recruiting companies. Whilst the study focuses on the end of the students' educational journey and the entering into employment, the research is still significant as it highlights students' attitudes and behaviours when observing key messages within advertising campaigns. These can also be linked to messages at the beginning of the process. The study focuses on three main variables which help to attract students to apply for places. These are pictures, the term 'graduate', and 'career path'. The reason for including this study in this chapter is to indicate the link to HEI recruitment and factors influencing choice of institution.

The research involves final year students and uses a survey method to gather data, (refer to Table 2.3). The main findings of the research suggest that students are most attracted to recruitment campaigns which include pictures of success, headings and career path. This poses some challenges with respect to HEI recruitment, which is whether the three variables can be contextualised with respect to initial enrolments onto specific courses. Blackman (2006) also finds that details covering position, distance, and location are influencing factors on student choice of HEI application. This view is supported by some of the earlier studies in this section, which indicate that those programmes offering accessibility to education and future employment are all influencing factors. These studies include: Beretelsen (2008), Datar, Garvin and Cullen (2010), Gross and Hogler (2005), Kewell and Beeby (2003), Lowrie (2008), Lowrie and Wilmott (2009), Lynch (2006), and Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion (2009). If Blackman's (2006) findings can be established as significant for initial enrolment then the variables of pictures, headings, and career could be usefully integrated into any student entry processes.

Allen, Van Scotter and Otondo (2004) argue that recruitment is an important form of 'persuasive' marketing. Bettinghaus (1973), as cited in Blackman (2006), defined persuasive marketing as attempting to change behaviours or wants. In order to remain competitive, HEIs ought to be aware of this approach to communication within the recruitment process. Thornsteinson and Highhouse (2003) stress the need for attractive advertisements to encourage action. Effective student recruitment campaigns will hopefully persuade potential students to apply for programmes. Blackman (2006) cautions against this and proposes that only appropriate or suitably qualified candidates should be attracted to specific campaign and recruitment processes, otherwise sifting through a mass of applications could be over-laborious, costly and ineffective in securing the most appropriate student enrolments.

2.4.2 Segmentation within student recruitment

'Branding', that is creating awareness of a name in a person's mind, is not a new phenomenon and is not limited to only commercial enterprises. It has been suggested, for instance, by Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014), that the concept belongs within the student recruitment process. Before focusing on the branding of HEIs, it is important for those responsible for recruitment to be aware of their most influential stakeholders, (persons of interest), and segments. According to Kotler et al. (2009), appropriate segmentation occurs when:

1. The segment can be measured. In other words the size of the segment and possible profitability from purchasing power can be assessed;
2. The segment needs to be large enough to be profitable;
3. The segment must be accessible;
4. It must be responsive to marketing methods and communications;
5. Must be sustainable over time.

It is therefore important for HEIs to adopt such an approach within its functions and processes when planning recruitment. Dibb et al. (2012) provide four categories for effective segmentation. These include: demographic variables, such as, age, gender, race and income; geographic variables, such as, population, region, market density and climate; psychographic variables, such as, personality attributes, motives and lifestyle; and finally, behaviouristic variables, for example, volume usage, benefit expectation, brand loyalty and price sensitivity. These key terms will be covered further as the chapter progresses.

There has been a range of research into segmentation and student recruitment. Rindfleish (2003), for instance, examines segmentation and the profiling of particular groups in order for HEIs to reduce risks of recruiting the 'wrong' student, (Harrison-Walker 2010), who may not be retained. The research focuses on segment profiling and uses geo-demographic mapping as a framework on which to build the study. Tonks and Farr (1995) also argue that geo-demographic segmentation is relevant to the student recruitment process. Rindfleish (2003) further suggests that segment profiling builds on geo-demographics. The process involves geo-demographics and buyer behaviour.

The research carried out by Rindfleish (2003) focuses on six main segments. These segments include: 'suburban retirement' (age 65+, retirees and widows); 'suburban empty nests' (two-person households, middle aged or 65+ on low incomes); 'low status family' (young or middle aged families on low incomes or single incomes); 'urban retirement' (predominantly widows or 65+ and do not own a car); 'suburban welfare' (one parent families, divorced, separated or unemployed); and 'mid-status suburban' (middle aged and older home owners in white collar occupations with two cars). Through the identification of 24 lifestyle profiles, the research findings indicate that a university's most successful segment for student recruitment is the mid-status suburban. The segment with the most potential for a HEI to target its marketing and recruitment campaigns on is the suburban retirees, which represents 50% of the potential market from the research. Rindfleish (2003) uses existing databases for the research and selects a number of postcodes to focus the data collection, (see Table 2.3). This particular study highlights the importance of segmentation to HEIs when identifying possible profitable segments which are large enough, accessible and responsive to communication methods, (Kotler et al. 2009).

In some respects Rindfleish (2003) is supported by Angulo, Pergelova and Rialp (2010), who also explains market segmentation. This study bases its research on rational and emotional factors relating to a student's choice of institution. The research involves 21 focus groups and the analysis of 729 self-completed questionnaires. (Refer to Table 2.3 for further detail on the methods). The main findings of the research identify six main cluster groups and segments into which potential students can be categorised into. These differ from those of Rindfleish (2003) and include: the 'independent'; the 'entrepreneur'; the 'rational'; the 'dreamer'; the 'hard worker'; and the 'emotional'. The independent, hard worker and rational thinkers are driven by economic welfare and the need to be individualistic. The entrepreneur is the segment that looks to the institution as a means to develop and form networks. The dreamer is a student who needs support and is less practical. Finally, emotional thinkers are those who attach their success to supporting their families. These can be split further into two main segments, which are rational and emotional thinkers. The research results show that all students bear some of the rational factors in mind when applying for an institution. However, rational factors are particularly associated with the pragmatic thinker and include: his or her perception of quality and high standards, his image of the university, infrastructure and physical facilities, his potential academic and career opportunities and the financial cost involved.

Angulo, Pergelova and Rialp (2010) also find two emotional factors contributing to student choice, these being international academic alliances and opportunities for part time employment during their study period. Both the rational and emotional factors display characteristics similar to the findings of Bowden (2011), Burns (2011) as cited in Swain (2011), Grosjean (2004), Marzzorol and Soutar (2002), Morrish and Lee (2011), and Varman, Biswatosh and Per-Skalen (2011). All of these studies highlight at least one of these factors in their research. Hence, it would appear reasonable to discern these as important to student choice of institution. Kotler and Keller (2009) suggest that making reference to segmentation makes it is easier to better align products and services to the needs of the potential student consumer.

Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014) argue that institutions need to ensure that segmentation and targeting strategies are the most appropriate and effective. The more successful the institution is at targeting and recruiting students the more prominent a competitor it becomes in the HEI sector. Bunzel (2007) and Joseph et al. (2012) both recognise the competitiveness of the HEI market and place an emphasis on the importance of brand identity in attracting students and other interested parties, such as parents. Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014), conducted a study in the USA to determine the factors that attract students to an institution. (Their approach to the methods can be found in Table 2.3.) Like Angulo, Pergelova and Rialp (2010), Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014) use a cluster analysis to identify groups with common views on the choice of HEI. They split their findings into three main groups, these being: ‘satisfactory seekers’, ‘financially focused’ and ‘deliberators’. These researchers show that satisfactory seekers tend to opt for an institution that has a good atmosphere, the latest technology and a good reputation. This cluster and its prominent factors for student choice are similar to the findings of Gajic (2010) and Newman and Jahdi (2009), who also identify the physical evidence, identity, and image as important factors when selecting an institution. The financially focused group are those who identify cost as a major factor when selecting an institution. Bowden (2011) also identifies cost as an element, although in this study the financial aspects of choice of institutions are not considered a priority for students. This was also a finding of Quigley et al. (1999). Finally, deliberators are the cluster who consider reputation, quality scholarships, and environment as important when deliberating over choice of HEI.

Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014) suggest that these three clusters can usefully contribute to an institution's segmentation strategies and provide some indication as to how to target potential students. Interestingly, findings also reveal how individuals from these clusters value effective communication. The financial seekers and deliberators are influenced more by word of mouth and recommendations from family and friends; whereas, the satisfactory seekers prefer to collect information about the HEI from advertisements, guidance counsellors and tours of the institution. It is, therefore, important for HEIs to consider appropriate integrated marketing communication strategies in order to promote the benefits from studying at a particular institution. Being able to prioritise students and provide targeted marketing campaigns is more cost effective than pursuing the entire population. Ultimately this approach will lead to long term longevity (Homburg, Droll and Totzek 2008) and the recruitment of the right customer, (Harrison-Walker 2010).

2.4.3 Student recruitment strategies

In the context of examining student recruitment strategies, it is relevant to explore the actual stages of student recruitment. Research conducted by Chapman (1986) indicates a number of stages students will go through before confirming their intention to attend a specific HEI. The research suggests that there are five main stages of the recruitment process. These include: pre-search behaviour, search behaviour, application decision, choice decision and matriculation decision. Table 2.2 below will summarise these stages and also provide some appraisal of the benefits and challenges HEIs encounter at each stage. Points of interest, which help to synthesise the content can provide effective future recruitment strategies.

Table 2.2 Stages of recruitment, Watson (2016), (adapted from Chapman (1986))

Stage	Chapman (1986)	Benefits of this stage for the HEI	Risks for the HEI if not managed effectively	Points of interest for HEIs
Pre-search	This stage can occur years before the student is ready to make a choice and can be influenced by parents. At this stage practicalities such as, suitability for higher education, will be assessed and costs will be considered.	HEIs can begin their recruitment campaigns early to attract students to the benefits, programmes, and facilities of the institution.	Chapman (1986) finds that the pre-search stage is difficult to set. When exactly does this start? How does this start? Is this influenced by external stakeholders, demographics, values and culture?	The HEI needs to focus marketing research activity into this area to identify key times when students will be receptive to recruitment campaigns. Some HEIs use recruitment agencies to gather data on potential students and pay a fee in line with the number of students recruited. Utilising agencies can lead to increase in student attraction to the HEI, particularly when they focus on merits of certain communities and areas. For example, the opportunity to work with local community leaders in the West of London.
Search behaviour	At this stage the student is active and gathers information from a range of sources including teachers, parents, and friends. Students will be looking at the HEI offerings including programmes, quality, facilities, and future careers.	HEIs are aware of students' desires to collect information and, at this point, HEIs should be enabling access to this through effective, marketing campaigns, e.g. through the HEIs' websites, prospectuses, and advertisements.	Whilst the HEIs are aware of this search behaviour, it is still not clear when it begins and how students attribute certain advantages of study at specific HEIs, particularly in respect of each HEI's cost effectiveness. HEIs must not only recognise this search stage, but know also where and how to target students. As Chapman and Litten (1984) indicate this stage is comprehensive and requires the students to work hard to find an institution suitable to their needs.	There are opportunities for the HEIs to focus resources on this stage and conduct research at the start, middle and end of the students search. The challenge with this is to know when the search starts.

Application Decision	Students will be ready to apply for HEI at this point. Generally, Chapman (1986) argues, students will make applications based on two main factors: firstly, they will apply to the institution that meets their desires and attributes, and secondly, they will often apply for a HEI where they are likely to gain admission.	Student applications will be received and HEIs can determine their approach to selecting the 'right' student based on admissions criterion and financial aid. (Harrison-Walker 2010)	The student has made his or her choice and HEIs only have fairly limited influence over that decision. This is similar to the five step model process at the 'procurement stage' (Moen 2015). Another challenge at this stage is whether the student has selected the institution as a primary choice or a safe alternative. The latter could lead to reduced uptake on student offers if first choices are offered by other HEIs.	Whilst influence over student decision is difficult at this stage, HEIs can still research students' reasons for applications. Gathering this information may contribute to improved future recruitment campaigns.
Choice Decision	The choice stage is when the students have made their applications and have been offered a place of admittance to a HEI.	The student has been offered a place on the course and has accepted it. Both parties appear to be satisfied at this stage.	A student might have had offers for a number of HEIs and reject the place offered. Some higher ranking HEIs can offer grade 'A' students places. However, in reality, this can lead to the institution being oversubscribed. Whilst this might appear attractive in terms of potential profit logistically this can have a number of negative aspects, for instance, it can result in quality reduction due to work overload and large class sizes. Alpert (1971) refers to the notion of	To contribute to student procurement, students may benefit from campus visits as an option. The students can then see the facilities on offer. This suggestion from Chapman (1986) seems to have been advocated and endorsed by the study conducted by Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014) who place attention on campus visits and personal interactions with the HEI staff. Further research can also be conducted with these students to help the HEI understand acceptance and rejection of offers.

			‘determinant attributes’ meaning the factors involving emotion, behaviour and the attributes the student attaches when making the choice of the HEI. If the determinant attributes are not met then the student may not accept the offer. Students may also wish to defer their application at this point for economic and social reasons.	
Matriculation Decision	In this final stage students are offered a university place months prior to commencement of study. During this time circumstances can change and the student will not take up the offer and subsequently will not accept the place of study at the HEI.	HEIs need to be aware of the dangers of this stage. They may keep in contact with the student(s) and provide enticement through integrated communications. In other words maintain ongoing communications through an array of methods, for example, emails, website updates and direct mail.	If HEIs do not manage this stage effectively and lose students at the intake stage then this will be costly to the institution. Not only can this impact on profit, but it may also affect student experience and quality of class interactions and group dynamics.	The HEI must keep recruited students engaged. For instance, this can be done through social media posts, email contact and so on. For those students who fall into the ‘no show’ category they can be contacted to discover the reasons for their opting out of the HEI. Chapman (1986)

Although there are various perspectives on the stages of student recruitment, Chapman (1986) provides a systematic framework that can help to focus attention on the importance of assessing recruitment at the different stages of the student's decision making process. Some rather interesting aspects of this framework, other than the aforementioned five categories dedicated to recruitment, include: the economic and social factors that influence student choice, in particular the influence of parents and other social groups at the pre-search and search behaviour stage. According to Johnson-Elie (2015), HEIs attempt to create attractive offers when supplying students with factors important to them. These may include focusing on expanding services in health and wellness. Such factors, communicated at the pre-search and search behaviour stages may not only be attractive and a comfort to new students, but also to other social groups influencing the student, such as, parents and relatives.

The use of agencies was also identified at the pre-search stage. Student recruitment agencies can be effective when attracting students to an HEI. Largely agencies will target specific demographic and geographic groups to improve numbers of applications. Murphy (2018), suggests that some agencies have access to 50 million students worldwide. Forman (2013) also encourages the use of agencies as they provide valuable services to students. Not only will they help students to complete their applications, they will also advise them on travel and accommodation, thus linking to the economic and social aspects of recruitment. As Forman (2013) indicates the use of agencies is quite broad and their duties will cut across other stages of the framework, including, the search and application stages. This view of agencies is positive. However, Kopvillem (1992), finds that the use of agencies can be disappointing with respect to making false promises and students being left disappointed when the HEI does not deliver on expectations. It is possible that this is due to conflicts of interest because many agencies work on commission per student, as Darrup-Boychuck (2015) identifies. Bundy (nd), provides a solution to possible conflicts of interest through the use of contracts and stages of payments based on recruitment and eventual student achievement rates.

Keystone (2017) notes the growing complexity and diversity of potential students and discusses the expertise of recruitment agencies in matching the student with the appropriate HEI. This leads to continued quality standards being delivered within the higher education sector. Pimpa (2003) also argues that many students trust recruitment agents and that they are influenced by these agencies over other stakeholders, including the students' peers.

Chapman (1986) contends that HEI research is important at each stage of the recruitment process. Frolich and Stensaker (2010) also find that this is the case when they are recruiting and selecting students. From the selected institutions chosen for the study, most were in agreement that the recruitment process is developed through the application of specific research strategies. (Refer to Table 2.3 for further detail on the study's research strategy). New students may be asked about their choice and experience of admissions and from these findings future strategies may be developed. This research finds that HEIs develop these processes in order to satisfy students' needs rather than to merely maintain existing processes from one year to the next; a point which relates to the study's further findings which show that the institutions researched took a more marketing-orientated approach to meeting the requirements of students in order to remain competitive.

The aforementioned research by Chapman (1986) can be utilised further when assessing specific recruitment strategies. Evans (2012) also provides examples of effective recruitment and selection strategies by focusing on 'first generation' college students. Such students are considered predominantly 'at risk'. This finding is also identified by Hand and Payne (2008), who found that not many students tended to have the emotional support necessary in preparation for academic study or the experience to learn from other social groups close to them, such as parents, siblings and relatives. Evans (2012) argues that this research focuses on specific demographic segments of the education market. These are African American first generation students. The study places an emphasis on the recruitment strategies that are useful in attracting this group based on socio-economic factors. By encouraging African American students to take up study, Evans (2012) argues that graduating students will, on average, earn 50% more than those African Americans who do not engage with the education sector.

According to Evans (2012), it is also anticipated that once first generation African Americans are educated they will encourage their children to attend various HEIs. The data collection method employed for this particular study was the interview method. (Refer to Table 2.3 for further detail on the research strategy). The findings of the research indicate a number of factors affecting recruitment. These factors include: geographical radius within five hours between the home and campus; flexible classroom hours (both day time and evening timetables); direct intervention at school/college open events; and the availability of joining minority groups. By not advertising minority groups and clubs or identifying these on campus tours, there tended to be a negative effect on student recruitment to the institution. This was also a finding of Thomas (2007), who indicates that there are issues with HEIs if a focus on minority groups is lacking. Another influencing factor affecting recruitment, as Evans (2012) argues is the importance of course content being effectively communicated to potential students. The factors that Evans (2012) suggests are important in the recruitment process and can be linked to Chapman (1986), particularly at the search behaviour stage. Students are gathering information at this point in the process and the factors that Evans (2012) highlights may help towards the effectiveness of marketing communications.

Evans (2012) also addresses the admissions stage, which relates to Chapman's (1986) application decision stage. At this stage, Evans (2012) indicates that support and guidance from admissions staff and schools/colleges is important to ensure students know how to apply to an institution and to prepare them for their study period. Evans's (2012) findings relate to the choice, decision and the matriculation decision stage of Chapman (1986), with respect to maintaining communication and engagement between the student and the institution. Those interviewed found that online advertisements and television commercials were clear and informative. These students also received post to their homes containing information about the institution.

Both Evans (2012) and Chapman (1986) are studies that are relevant to focusing on the recruitment process and the value of maintaining communication with students. Their suggestions for communications include both push and pull strategies. That is, to push the HEI onto the student by offering incentives or by pulling the student through to the institution via advertising. Smith (1995), suggests various options relating to ‘integrated’ marketing communications methods; in other words the use of a range of communications methods that, according to the Business Dictionary (2016), reinforce each other when an HEI plans its marketing strategy.

2.4.4 Online recruitment

Teoh, Tan and Chong (2013) argue in favour of the positive influence that the internet has had on the recruitment process. Gummeson (1991), Singh and Finn (2003), and the Internet Recruiting Report (2006) also emphasise the benefit of using the internet to recruit as the internet is available 24/7, 365 days a year. Galanaki (2002) argues in favour of the cost-saving benefits of online recruitment. Bartram (2000) finds the benefits for the applicant similar to those of the recruiter, that is, it is available to access at any time during the day and at no additional cost. Bartram (2000) also points out the benefits of the internet such as being able to access both the national and international market.

Teoh, Tan and Chong (2013) provide an interesting framework when reviewing student recruitment strategies online. They build on the work of Gregory (1970), Shockley (2007), and, Hill and McShane (2008), who discern the characteristics of perceptions. These characteristics include: awareness of an object, beliefs of the object, acceptance of the object, and prior knowledge and experience of the object. These researchers use the basis of these characteristics and apply them to the recruitment process on the internet in the following manner:

- Online recruitment provides detail to potential applicants on future career aspirations, opportunities and employability based on the skills and knowledge acquired from the specific course programmes on offer.
- The applicant is encouraged to be self-aware of future careers and be able to form ideas and interest in various working sectors. Again this is linked to courses, skills and location.
- Having access to the above information helps to encourage applicants to research wider and assess potential long term career strategies and occupations.

Consequently, the internet can provide applicants with very valuable information when it is used effectively. However, the content must be 'student-friendly' and the website easy to use, (Cober et al. 2003, Sylva and Mol 2009).

Teoh, Tan and Chong (2013) further argue that there are three main factors influencing effective online student recruitment, these being: 'user-friendliness', 'information provision', and 'website usability'. User-friendliness includes accessible website pages, clear layouts, and search tabs. Information provision includes appropriate and relevant content. Finally, website usability points to the colour, text, photos and functions of the pages. These factors are similar to those of Davis (1986) as cited in Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw (1989), and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), whereby users assess the information available and the ease of use of the online platform. Davis (1986), as cited in Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw (1989), refers to these factors or applicant beliefs as the platform's perceived usefulness and helpfulness. Bandura (1982) and Lepper (1985) suggest that if a system is easy to use this can lead to effectiveness and feelings of personal control. Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw (1989) argue that using the TAM helps to determine and understand user behaviour.

Teoh, Tan and Chong's (2013) study involves students in Malaysia. (For details on the methods and sample refer to Table 2.3.) The main findings of this research state that students clearly find online recruitment useful. User-friendliness is particularly emphasised as important by students; a finding which also relates to the research of Sylva and Mol (2009), who also found this factor to be very important in the recruitment process. Information was also stressed as an important contributory factor when making online applications. The information must be 'fit for purpose' and provide students with the details that they require or have requested. Foroudi et al. (2019) argue that a well-designed website will lead to more engagement. Many organisations link their websites to social media. Teoh, Tan and Chong (2013) see this as an additional advantage, although they warn that negative perceptions may impact in a manner detrimental to the brand. Finally, it was found that acceptable website usability also attracted students when applying online. Conversely, websites offering poor usability tend to deter students from applying online. Whilst Teoh, Tan and Chong (2013) review online recruitment in general terms, individual HEIs might be able to utilise the findings from this research in their own ways when planning their research strategies. All the above findings may be usefully applied with the work from Chapman (1986) and Frolich and Stensaker (2010) when researching recruitment and intervention in the student recruitment process at different times of the search stages.

Another interesting recruitment strategy which is considered in research by Frolich and Stensaker (2010) is the potential opportunity for HEIs to form agreements with local further education colleges to help build collaborative relationships. When agreements are made, the various institutions can often form their own offerings of programmes, thus helping to distinguish themselves from competitors. In other words, one institution will offer one specialism whilst another will offer something different, even though overall vocational and professional themes will still remain. Some care does need to be made with respect to this. As Michelsen and Aamodt (2007) indicate, the reason is that some institutions occasionally attempt to expand their suite of academic courses based on raising their HEIs' research profiles. This can be a wasted effort if the programmes are not sought after by students. Aamodt and Kyvik (2005) argue that students will select an institution based on its profile and the programmes on offer. Whilst entering agreements may limit student choice, the long term benefits, as Frolich and Stensaker (2010) explain, that programmes can commence, duplication of courses is avoided, and class sizes may be limited to provide a cohesive learning environment.

Schofer and Meyer (2005) indicate that the global higher education sector is being expanded through 'massification', 'marketisation' and 'internationalisation'. According to Collins (2016), massification is the process of providing products to a mass market, and internationalisation is making products international, (in this instance making higher education the concern of many nations). Goddard (2015) argues that by 2025 student enrolment throughout the globe will have doubled. This suggests the potential for growth of HEIs and, as a consequence, places further importance and emphasis on effective recruitment strategies. Boronski and Hassan (2015) support the view of the importance of the global market and explain the need for Governments to place an emphasis on education as a form of investment in human capital which enables a country to acquire a competitive advantage over others. Ma (2014) focuses on recruitment strategies within Taiwan and finds that local, national, and global recruitment strategies, working in collaboration with each other, (rather than in opposition), are effective when engaging with potential students. Ma (2104) argues that although HEIs in Taiwan have been given more autonomy through the encouragement of marketisation, the educational reforms introduced in July 2004, enable the Government in Taiwan to retain much power over the HE sector and the allocation of resources. The significance of the study is that it establishes the importance of reviewing recruitment strategies in a number of regional and global contexts. This view is supported by that of Rhoades and Marginson (2002), who also indicate the value of synthesis and cohesion in such strategies.

Recruitment strategies can vary between HEIs, and being aware of the more effective strategies has become essential for these organisations. Wilkins and Huisman (2011) study student recruitment in the West of England. They focus on the choices and motives of international students and base their findings on feedback derived from in-depth interviews and past studies focusing, on push and pull factors. (Refer to Table 2.3 for further details on their research strategy.) There is a range of previous studies which also consider these factors such as Baldwin and James (2000), Bass (2005), Bodycott (2009), Hui (2001), Mazzarol and Soutar (2002), and Zhao and Guo (2002).

Bodycott (2009) identifies a number of pull factors used to attract students to an HEI, these include knowledge of the institution and its positive reputation. This is an important factor. ‘Reputation’ may be gained through word of mouth from (close) others and/or league table rankings. Ensuring that students are supported by the institution and academic staff together with family and friends provides reassurance to the student. Promoting value for money in terms of course fees, scholarships and lifestyle expenditure is another feature designed to entice the student. This has been observed as significant by Davies et al. (2016) and Dibbs et al. (2012). Location and safety can also be important influencers when students select their place of study. This was a factor identified earlier by Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992). Finally, employability and success stories can greatly impact on the student’s choice of institution. The more testimonials the institution can provide on employability from past students and current organisations the better, as it will actively demonstrate and impress on applicants the benefits from studying at a particular institution.

Push factors include economic, social and political sources which may attract the student to an institution. Bodycott's (2009) research in China draws on both students and parents for the sample. (Refer to table 2.3 for further detail on the research strategy.) The research findings show the different sources of attraction associated to the institution between these two groups. They reveal no significance in some areas, but, there are contrasting views in others. The findings suggest that both parents and students are attracted to a HEI through attending fairs and exhibitions, and the provision of information on course programmes. Other factors include: academic support, having relatives close by and being able to seek part time employment whilst studying. Differences do arise, however. Parents are more influenced by past success stories from relatives, cost of the courses, emotional support for the son or daughter, and an HEI's academic reputation. Students on the other hand are enticed through the internet, TV advertisements, newspaper advertisements, facilities of the HEI and the environment in which it is set.

In line with Bodycott (2009), Wilkins and Huisman (2011) find that student choice and selection is influenced by various factors. They assert that students deem university fees, living expenses and internet access as significant sources when exploring the advantages of studying at a particular HEI. Other enticements to the HEI often include, university ranking and views of parents. The findings here emphasise those of Bodycott (2009), particularly the importance of parental influence. McBurnie and Ziguras (2007) support the view of university rankings as being an important indicator favourable to student recruitment and argue in favour of the impact quality and brand can have on HEI's ability to recruit.

2.4.5 Section summary

This section has considered the competitive nature of student recruitment, segmentation strategy in the student recruitment process, and student recruitment strategies.

It is important for HEIs to understand the bases of effective recruitment strategies in order to gain advantage in the higher education market. Narver and Slater (1990), Ross et al. (2013), and Varble and Hawes (2009), all explore the impact of cohesion in the management and business functions of an HEI in order for the organisation's recruitment process to be a success. Without this inter-collaborative approach conflicts and rivalry can occur and, as a consequence, internal problems may produce adverse distractions from effective recruitment strategy and planning. Institutions may become aware of this and ensure that the aforementioned functions are coordinated in order to establish unity and help to produce an effective recruitment campaign.

Bush, Ferrell and Thomas (1998), Ross et al. (2013), and Stewart (1991), all draw attention to the marketing-orientated and customer-orientated approaches to recruitment. Ensuring that student needs are met will make an HEI more attractive to potential applicants. Boronski and Hassan (2015), Ma (2014), Marzzorol and Soutar (2002), Morrish and Lee (2011), Rhoades and Marginson (2002), and Schofer and Meyer (2005) posit the importance of both global and local marketplaces as sources of student recruitment.

As we progress through the analysis of student recruitment in a competitive environment, recruitment strategies begin to emerge. These are of particular relevance to this current research thesis. Armstrong and Lumsden (1999), Baldwin and James (2000), Bartram (2000), Bass (2005), Bodycott (2009), Chapman (1986), Elliot and Healy (2001), Evans (2012), Galanaki (2002), Gummeson (1991), Hui (2001), Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014), McBurnie and Ziguras (2007), Marazzoral and Soutar (2002), Morrish and Lee (2011), Noel-Levitz (2006), Singh and Finn (2003), Teoh, Tan and Chong (2013), Wilkins and Huisman (2011), and Zhao and Guo (2002), all identify a number of influencers and communication methods that can be used in order to attract and entice the student to apply for a particular course. Among these influencers are the quality aspects of programmes, HEI facilities, academic reputation, HEI ranking, student lifestyle, low levels of crime in the location of the HEI, costs, personal touches in communication, informative prospectuses, exhibitions, the use of the internet, television advertisements, and prospects of future employment. In a number of instances, parents were referred to as being part of the selection process; so applicant consultation with family and friends in order to hear success stories appears to influence some students who apply to a particular HEI. These factors will be looked at further as this thesis progresses and will help to form the conceptual framework at the end of this chapter.

Segmentation has also been examined and a number of segmentation categories identified, for instance in work by; Angulo, Pergelova and Rialp (2010), Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014), and Rindfleish (2003) who place emphasis on specific segments that appear to attract students to a particular HEI. Their research findings are quite helpful to the for-profit HEP being researched in this thesis. This study has invested in market research and identified four specific segments for targeting within the London, Manchester and Birmingham areas. These will be considered further in chapters 3 and 4 when analysing and evaluating the justification for these. Interestingly, they include a mixture of variables from the four categories developed by Dibb et al. (2012).

The work of Chapman (1986) is informative and it will be interesting to contextualise the recruitment process touched on by this researcher to the HEP under current investigation. For instance, is this HEP's approach to a recruitment strategy being utilised effectively? At what stages are the HEP's recruitment strategies and integrated marketing communications used to advertise and attract potential students to the HEP? These questions will be addressed as the current study evolves.

The general findings from this section posit the notion that the student recruitment environment is highly competitive. This general judgement relates to the earlier definitions of marketisation and changes within the education sector as a result of reform. Segmentation strategy is a significant option in the recruitment process. It provides opportunities for HEIs to become more focused both internally and externally, thus encouraging the provision of an effective recruitment campaign and marketing cohesion within the institution. Finally, the numerous factors involved in the student recruitment process and stages have been outlined in general terms. Being aware of how to utilise these factors in order to enhance student applications is essential if an institution is to meet its targets and remain competitive within an expanding educational sector.

2.5 Commonalities and limitations of past studies

Throughout the literature review, a range of studies have been both presented and appraised, and an analytical approach has been taken to review these. According to Andrews (2005), a literature review is a method that gathers multiple studies and critically analyses the findings in order to identify gaps in knowledge, develop specific research questions and address a topic. Dunne (2011) emphasises the importance of this approach when reviewing the literature and suggests that in some circumstances these reviews can be used in isolation as separate research papers. The main point of difference between literature reviews is that one can be quite a narrative review, that is providing a summary of the literature; whilst another may provide a systematic and analytical review of the literature from many studies in order to identify pertinent themes, and commonalities and contrasts. Cooper (1998) summarises the literature review as an entity that can provide the connection between related topics perhaps leading to a new primary study.

Table 2.3 below illustrates a range of previously outlined studies that have been conducted with respect to marketisation and student recruitment. The majority of the research is focused on institutions used as case studies, or small samples of the potential student population. According to Bryman and Bell (2011), the case study approach allows for an intensive analysis of a particular case. This could be a single organisation, place, person or event. The case study method has the advantage of enabling the researcher to gain deeper meaning and understanding from the subject being researched. The disadvantage of using a case study, as Bryman and Bell (2011) assert, is the lack of generalisability or external validity of the research findings. As indicated in Table 2.3 below, in most cases the participant numbers and focus are quite narrow. Consequently, Bryman and Bell (2011) seem justified in their assertion that the research results may not be able to be easily generalised. Seawright and Gerring (2008) suggest this problem may be overcome through the analysis of a selection of case-studies. This approach has been taken in this review. If considered as individual case-studies, there are limitations to the various pieces of research touched on. Most of these are related to the issue of external validity. However, the overall findings reveal commonalities with respect to the results and patterns of behaviour. Additionally, various themes emerge, which relate to marketisation and student recruitment.

In terms of the methods employed by the researchers, these tend to vary between primary and secondary data collection and qualitative and quantitative means of data collection. There are advantages and disadvantages of each of these methods. At this stage in the current study, analysis of research methods will only be outlined briefly, as indicated in the Table 2.3 below. A more in-depth appraisal of data collection methods and research strategy will be adopted in the next chapter. This deals with the methodology of this current study. Interestingly, only a few of the aforementioned studies took a mixed methods approach to data collection. As Lisle (2011) indicates, mixed methods combine both qualitative and quantitative data collection. Merten (2003) argues that mixed method approaches are suitable to use in the disciplines of sociology and education among others. This strategy, therefore, would appear to be suitable to use for this study. However, there are disadvantages of this approach and, as Bryman and Bell (2011) suggest, even when mixed methods are used it does not necessarily produce valuable content if the data collection and sampling have been inadequately conducted.

In general, Table 2.3 below provides key summary details regarding the samples, methods and their possible limitations. It also includes some suggestions for additional research. The findings are important as they highlight the themes relevant to this current study.

Table 2.3 Commonalities and limitations of past studies, Watson (2016)

Author	Sample	Methods	Limitations	Findings and Themes
Angulo, Pergelova and Rialp (2010)	21 focus groups – 168 prospective students. 729 SAQ	Focus groups and questionnaires	The results identified the different segments. However, the emotional factors/segments required further research to understand the psychological factors and reasons. Interview or further questions within the focus groups could have provided this content.	The findings reveal six segments that HEIs can target. Often potential students are attracted to a HEI for rational reasons of infrastructure, academic and career opportunities, and cost of tuition fees. Students are also inclined to select an institution based on international academic alliances and opportunities for part-time employment. **Themes: the independent; the entrepreneur; the rational; the dreamer; the hard worker and the emotional.**
Blackman (2006)	Final year students	Survey	Contextualised to the work environment, there is an assumption this could be linked to the HEI environment. Probing questioning may have been missed. This could have been developed with the use of other methods.	The main findings of the research suggest that students were attracted to recruitment campaigns which include pictures, headings and career path. **Themes: picture; heading and career path.**

Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014)	246 undergraduate students. One private university in north-western USA.	Survey	Some of the participants were incentivised to participate. This could have led to bias in the answers provided. Only new entry students were considered for the survey. Other students within the institution were omitted from the research. A case study approach was taken and, whilst this could provide in-depth understanding of the institution, generalising the results may have been difficult.	The research finds three prominent segments when exploring student choice: satisfactory seekers, financial focused, and deliberators. **Themes: satisfactory seekers; financially focused; deliberators; financial aid; accredited university and programmes; scholarships, environment; technology; location; interaction; reputation.**
Bodycott(2009)	251 parents, 100 students	Questionnaires and focus groups	The sample size was small and could not be generalised. The demographics within the family could have been broken down further.	The results show the different attractions to an institution between these two groups. They reveal no significance in some areas; but are bipolar in others. The findings suggest that both parents and students are attracted to a HEI through attending fairs and exhibitions, and the provision of information on course programmes. Other factors include: academic support, having relatives close by and being able to seek part time employment whilst studying. Differences between the two groups are evident. Parents stakeholders, are strongly influenced by past success stories of relatives, cost of the course, emotional support for the child, and HEI reputation. Students on this spectrum are attracted through the internet, TV advertisements, newspaper advertisements, facilities of the HEI and its environment. **Themes: push and pull factors.**
Bowden (2011)	Cross – sectional case study with 474 participants	Self-administered survey	There were limitations of the research that could have impacted on confidence in the results and generalisability of the findings. For	The results showed that there were no differences between the results of the cohorts and students placed ‘satisfaction’ and ‘affective commitment’ as main determining variables when displaying loyalty to an

			instance, a cross sectional study was employed with a relatively small sample of first year students across a number of disciplines. To improve the validity of the results a longitudinal study might have been constructed, which might have included qualitative methods in order to underpin prior engagement before the survey and engagement through the course. The identification of differentiations between student-university and student-teacher based relationships would also have been useful in enhancing the study. In addition, cross cultural variations may also have been beneficial in order to determine the factors that influence 'loyalty' and 'engagement'.	institution. **Themes: satisfaction; affective commitment; calculative commitment; trust and loyalty.**
Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992)	253 sixth form students, first year students and final year Masters students.	Focus groups, conjoint analysis and survey	The sample was gathered from UCAS applications in three geographic locations. Explaining more about these could have been beneficial when generalising the findings. The case study approach was used; this limited the sample of first and final year students. Whilst the authors suggest that some generalisations may be drawn from the research, the sample make-up was limited in size and the study to one institution.	The results indicated that the course and geographic locations were important variables to students followed by accommodation. **Themes: course content; geographic location; social life; preference for campus or city university; sports facilities and accommodation.**

Davies et al. (2016)	1 business school in four countries.	Survey	The sample was quite broad in terms of geographic spread and therefore some generalisability might be possible. To widen the research, additional countries could have been included within the sample and more business schools. The questions could have been widened to further cultural considerations and institutional acceptance of diversity.	The results found that the students in the different countries tended to have the same motives based on lifestyle aspirations and developmental skills. Variances in motives were found when examining reputation, relative ease of completion and career outputs. Culture was a significant factor that influenced student motives. **Themes: personality match to subject perception; lifestyle perception; relative ease of completion of major; reputational effects; career outputs and developmental skills.**
Evans (2012)	12 African American students.	Interview	Limited sample size. However, in-depth interviews were conducted. The responses relied at times on only one participant's answers. Although it would appear that the findings supported past studies the limited sample size was an issue. Widening this might have been more appropriate. Identifying a range of HEIs for a more varied sample might have allowed for more generalised and valid conclusion.	The main findings revealed a number of factors impacting on the student recruitment process. These included: course information, access to minority groups, flexible timetables, online, media and postal communication. **Themes: geographic location; flexible classroom hours; direct intervention/communication by institutions and on-campus minority clubs.**
Frolich & Stensaker (2010)	Four universities and four colleges in Norway.	Semi-structured interviews	A longitudinal study was selected when undertaking the research over the period 2006-2008. The results over this fairly lengthy period could mean that they could be more appropriately generalised to some degree as the same approach to the data collection was consistent at each interval. However, the number of institutions participating in the	The main findings suggest HEIs are market-driven. Collaborative agreements between local institutions are formed to minimise duplication and reduce competition.

			research was rather limited and expanding this may have provided scope for further generalisations. Expanding this to other countries, and considering different educational policies and structures may also have revealed a range and variation of results.	**Themes: history; location and environment.**
Gajic (2010)	504 1st Year and 305 2nd year students between 2008-2009 (University of Belgrade)	Survey	The limitations relate to the use of a single case study institution. Disparities were evident between the sample sizes of 1st and 2nd year students. Widening the sample to other universities and ensuring equal samples between the years may have provided richer content and more varied and representative findings.	The findings highlighted the importance of marketing strategies to attract students and interested parties to HEIs. **Themes: product; price; promotion; place; process; people and physical evidence.**
Hatfield and Taylor (1998)	Case study focusing on feedback gained from the AACSB	Secondary sources	Caution needs to be drawn to the credibility of the results from this study as it was limited in size and the findings may not be generalisable. It was also based on secondary sources with all their potential limitations.	The research suggests, in line with the literature already covered within this chapter that business schools need to meet changing customers' needs. In so doing they need to plan strategically for this and develop the curriculum by working in partnership with students **Themes: strategic management framework; value creation.**
Hemsley-Brown and Oplatkla (2006)	15 empirical studies between 1992-2004	Secondary sources	Limitations included the lack of primary data and the limited number of studies selected to be reviewed. Future research might usefully include a combination of secondary sources and primary surveys,	The research found failings in institutions which included lack of information, poor image and reputation, and conflicts between commercial and educational perspectives. **Themes: marketing communications; image and**

			interviews, or focus groups.	**reputation; application of marketing models; transactional marketing the 4ps; relationship marketing; strategic approaches to marketing; widening participation in HE; strategic tools of marketing; market segmentation; market positioning and market planning.**
Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014)	Case study HEI based within the USA.	Focus groups	The institution was located in a remote rural town. This may have not allowed for an accurate cross section of the wider population. Focus groups were utilised for data gathering. Although rich content can be gathered from this method there are limitations, such as, small sample sizes, peer pressure and inaccurate responses to questions.	The general findings of the research found that the open days and printable/written materials contributed to the HEI's increase in student recruitment by 4.29% between the period of 2010-2014. **Themes: location; economic environment; competition; on-campus facilities; recruitment efforts and letter writing campaign.**
Ingleby (2015)	20 participants over 5 HEIs – 10 students and 10 tutors	Focus groups and loosely structured interviews	Expanding the sample HEIs and structuring more formal methods of data collection could have allowed for a wider range of participants being included within the study. This might have aided generalisability. More detail on the background of the HEIs would again have been useful to be able to ascertain external validity.	The findings revealed that tutors tended to view the changes within the education sector negatively. They disagreed with the view that the students are consumers. Alternatively, to this the students were in favour of this definition of themselves. **Themes: reflective practice; consumers; value for money; employability and moral objections.**
Morrish and Lee (2011)	40 participants Chinese students.	Semi-structured interviews	The sample size was small and purposive targeting Chinese students. Widening the sample could have led to other factors influencing the notion of country of study.	Chinese students were more likely to select a developed country such as New Zealand, the UK or USA for their studies because of the traditional reputation of such countries in providing quality education. **Themes: motivation; country image; practical factors; institutional factors and influencers/choice.**

Rindfleish (2003)	The sample size was reduced from 495 to 248 due to appropriateness of the target group.	Reviewing databases based on postcode at the institution and external database called Salmat	Lesser and Hughes (1986) suggest 500 is a minimum sample size for segment profiling. The case study focuses on only certain areas of Australia, one institution's database and one external database inputted by the company. Credibility of the data inputted within the institutions database could be questionable. Is the data accurate? The research is also subject to case study method limitations such as generalisability.	The results show that the university does have the potential to segment its programmes and enter into the relatively untapped market of the suburban retirees. The most successful segment for the institution was the mid-status suburban student. **Themes: suburban retirement; suburban empty nests; low status family; urban retirement; suburban welfare and mid-status suburban.**
Ross et al. (2013)	Case study institution	Survey	The use of the online survey could lead to errors when participants were interpreting the questions. The use of one case study institution in Australia restricts the data gathered and hinders generalisability of the findings. Expanding the scope of the sample and using additional methods of focus groups/interview could have contributed to the validity of the data gathered.	The findings of the research highlighted the importance of a customer-orientated approach in the student recruitment process. To be fully effective, the inter-functional orientation of staff within the HEI is also crucial to maintain a collegiate approach to increasing student numbers and revenue. The success of the latter can be attributed to the sharing of information on market trends, student needs and resolutions to gaps between HEIs and students' wants. **Themes: customer orientation; competitor orientation and inter-functional co-ordination.**
Teoh, Tan and Chong (2013)	250 Malaysian Students	Online questionnaire	Using email to distribute the questionnaire could pose logistical problems in the collection process. Online questioning can bring about issues amongst students. Clarity on questions and interpretation may also be a risk to the data collection. As the researchers suggest,	The findings reveal the positive impact user friendliness, information provided, and the effect website usability has on student recruitment online.

			interviews may be used to gain an in-depth investigation of the three variables. The limited number of participants could also lead to issues with generalisability. Hence a more balanced and wider sample is required for future studies.	**Themes: user friendliness; information provision and website usability.**
Varman, Biswatosh and Per-Skalen (2011)	17 MBA students	Interviews	The sample was small and confined to one business school within one institution. Widening the sample to other institutions and using other quantitative methods to measure student responses may have enhanced the findings. The research focused on the third world and replicating this within the developed world may possibly have produced either similar or different perspectives.	The majority of students have been affected by neoliberal Governmental subjectivity. Students were prepared in readiness for the practical work environment. **Themes: neoliberal Governmental and dominance of market subjectivity; discursive nurturing of market subjectivity and problematic consequences of market subjectivity.**
Wilkins and Huisman (2011)	160 international students	Self-completed questionnaire	The sample size was relatively small. Also convenience sampling was used. Further research could expand on this in order to investigate further reasons for selection of an HEI, and how this impacts on the decisions within the institution when forming a research strategy.	The main findings include: students deemed university fees, living expenses, and the internet as predominant factors when sourcing information on a HEI. Other enticements to the HEI included information from the university websites, university ranking, and the views of parents. **Themes: reputation; quality; content; ranking; expertise; recommendations; parental/peer influence; accommodation; marketing in home country; information; location; fees and ease of application.**

2.5.1 Variables and themes

the independent the entrepreneur the rational the dreamer the hard worker emotional picture heading career path satisfactory seekers financially focused deliberators financial aid accredited university and programmes scholarships environment technology location interaction reputation push and pull factors satisfaction affective commitment calculative commitment trust loyalty course content geographic location social life preference for campus or city university sports facilities accommodation personality match to subject perception lifestyle perception relative ease of completion of major reputational effects career outputs developmental skills geographic location flexible classroom hours direct intervention/communication by institution on-campus minority clubs history location environment product price promotion place process people physical evidence strategic management framework; AACSB framework value creation (means end framework) marketing communications image and reputation application of marketing models transactional marketing the 4ps relationship marketing strategic approaches to marketing widening participation in HE strategic tools of marketing market segmentation market positioning market planning location economic environment competition on-campus facilities recruitment efforts letter writing campaign reflective practice consumers value for money employability moral objections motivation country image practical factors institutional factors influencers of choice suburban retirement suburban empty nests low status family urban retirement suburban welfare and mid-status suburban customer orientation competitor orientation inter-functional co-ordination user friendliness information provision website usability. fees ease of application neoliberal Governmental dominance of market subjectivity discursive nurturing of market subjectivity problematic consequences of market subjectivity reputation quality content ranking expertise; recommendations parental/peer influence accommodation; marketing in home country information place

Figure 2.3 Summary of the variables from Table 2.3, Watson (2017)

The above figure 2.3 outlines a range of terms which represent the themes from the studies included in Table 2.3. They have been highlighted in different colours to represent the commonalities between the themes within the research. This indicates that common patterns and themes are emerging to suggest the importance of a number of factors on student choice when entering into the higher education sector.

The themes highlighted in blue represent the importance of pedagogic content, learning, information, and expertise. The themes noted in red refer to those factors that are linked to financial implications when applying for a HEI. Green presents emotional attachments and motives of the student. Grey denotes the elements of marketing strategy and the marketing mix. Yellow indicates those themes linked to employability. Turquoise represents brand, reputation and image. Dark green signifies communication and interactions between the student and institution, and purple is used to highlight those themes linked to location. Whilst there are varying degrees between the integration of the themes a set of collective dynamics have formed to aid students when making their choice of selection. They also contribute to HEI polices and strategies relating to pedagogic development, student recruitment and marketing. These will be summarised and used to set out the conceptual framework for this thesis.

2.6 Conceptual framework

The above literature has informed the following conceptual framework which will be used to develop a research strategy for this current thesis. Thus a link will be made between the literature and the research strategy for the thesis. This approach will enable the research findings to relate closely to relevant theory.

What has become apparent from the literature review is that marketisation in higher education has had some impact on the manner in which HEIs recruit their students. Market forces appear to have a significant impact on students' motivation, both intrinsically and extrinsically, and also their view of academic institutions, (Davies et al. 2016). It has been pointed out by such researchers as Armstong (2000), Joseph (1998), and Waimer & Vining (1999), that students see themselves as customers who expect to be satisfied with appropriate programmes, that are largely vocational and which offer the students the opportunity to transfer their knowledge into the ‘real world’ upon completion of their HEI courses. This view is also currently being supported by the DfE (2018), who are reviewing post 18 education to ensure graduates are equipped with the skills to be ‘work ready’.

Given the increase in competition and the shift in alternative private providers of higher education, it would be interesting to examine further a number of these aspects in order to determine the reasons for students’ selection of particular HEIs. The focus in this thesis, however, will be centred on a private for-profit provider, and will place emphasis on the shift in the delivery of programmes. The study will address a number of unanswered questions with regards to developing new models of teaching and alternative modes of study. It is suspected that the changes in delivery of programmes may be a direct result of Government neoliberal policy and its associated marketisation processes.

The work of Bowden (2011) is of interest because it focuses on some key themes associated with marketisation, such as ‘student satisfaction’ and ‘experiences’ that are important to a for-profit making university. These themes are related to notions of ‘brand’ and ‘loyalty’, and, as HEPs pursue competitive advantage and increased student numbers, it will be useful to investigate how these themes influence the HEP functions in a for-profit environment. Transferring the framework and some of the themes to the private higher education sector may reveal different results from those of Bowden (2011) in terms of the positive theme affecting loyalty or, for the purpose of this particular research, this term will be modified to that of ‘procurement’ of the student through recruitment (Moen 2015). Hollensen (2010) explains that, ‘loyalty’ is valuable to an institution and is specifically built on developing long term relationships with its students. Such loyalty, however, may not be possible to establish at the student recruitment stage because in some instances, the first interaction between the student and the institution may have only just occurred. Only those students applying for further courses could be considered loyal. (This will be examined to some extent when exploring the notion of brand.) Hence, the term, procurement, will be used rather than that of loyalty.

It is conceivable that 'calculative commitment' could be an important variable for the case study institution's students. Bowden's (2011) framework and this specific thesis are supported by a number of other studies. These include work by a substantial number of researchers. These include: Angulo, Pergelova and Rialp (2010), Armstrong and Lumsden (1999), Baldwin and James (2000), Bartram (2000), Bass (2005), Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014), Bodycott (2009), Bolton (1998), Chapman (1986), Elliot and Healy (2001), Evans (2012), Fullerton (2003), Galanaki (2002), Gustafsson, Johnson and Roos (2005), Hansen, Sandvik and Selness (2003) , Harrison-Walker (2001), Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner and Gremler (2002), Hess and Story (2005), Hui (2001), Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014), Marazzoral and Soutar (2002), McBurnie and Ziguras (2007), Morgan and Hunt (1994), Morrish and Lee (2011), Noel-Levitz (2006), Rauyruen and Miller (2007), Rindfleish (2003), Teoh, Tan and Chong (2013), Singh and Finn (2003), Wilkins and Huisman (2011), and Zhao and Guo (2002).

The advantage of the findings of Bernstein (2000), Apple (1995) and Boronski and Hassan (2015) reveal the complexity of the academic curriculum and the social disparities that may exist as HEIs become more competitive and are given greater autonomy. This aspect will be explored further. In addition, Bernstein's (2000) reference to 'enhancement', 'participation' and 'inclusion' with regards to a student's rights will be considered in the context of the student recruitment process.

The framework has been divided into a number of themes. 'Satisfaction', 'affective commitment', 'calculative commitment' and 'brand' are all independent of one another. However, they all contribute to acquiring and attracting the student to a HEP. 'Segmentation' and 'recruitment strategies' are again independent in their own right, but when combined they can add value to the student recruitment process. This process and 'procurement' (or acquisition of students), may then lead to enrolment and profit for the private HEP provider. All six themes are touched on in the past literature, and they have been considered when forming the framework. The four themes impacting on acquisition and procurement of the students have been categorised further into 'hygiene' and 'motivating' factors, (Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman, 1993). Separating these factors provides some further clarity with respect to the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of students. Hygiene factors are considered more extrinsic in terms of fees, costs and expertise of tutors, whilst affective commitment and brand are more intangible factors and opinions are formed through cognitive processing leading to intrinsic motivators. This distinction may help support the development of higher education strategies when attracting students to institutions.

The critical analysis in the literature review and the development of the conceptual framework will provide the basis for the exploration of answers to the following four research questions:

Research question one (RQ1) – How can a ‘For Profit’ HEP’s strategic decisions to expand and diversify its mode of delivery be understood in the contemporary context of the wider HEI sector?

This question provides a solid foundation on which to develop the thesis. It sets the scene for the research and provides the opportunity to consider consequential outcomes of Government policies and education reforms. This question will provide the basis for the investigation of the impacts of marketisation and how the ‘For Profit’ HEP is responding to the external consumer and competitive environment. It will also seek to review any changes in pedagogic approaches to delivery of its programmes as a consequence of these influences.

Research question two (RQ2) – Which factors relating to enrolment do students perceive as important when applying for a course within the ‘For Profit’ HEP?

This is important because the institution must have some effective insight into the scope of student’s emotional and rational attachments when applying for its courses. In particular, student experience and satisfaction from previous experience and success stories will be examined. The significance of relationships between the student and educator will be assessed. Emotional attachments and the location of the institution will also be factored into answering this question; and, to an extent, this question will consider the rights of students, as Bernstein (2000) suggests. Cost benefit analysis will be put forward as a factor in influencing student applications, as will brand-recognition and reputation. Once the results of the influencing factors are established, the chosen institution is then able to focus on these in order to create and use strategies to enhance student interest and hopefully increase applications to the institution.

Research question three (RQ3) – Does segmentation strategy influence the student recruitment process in the 'For Profit' HEP, if so why?

As indicated in the literature review, segmentation of the student population is another vital consideration for the provider. Attempting to target the entire potential student population may not be cost effective with respect to the creation of business and revenue for the HEP. Therefore segmentation will be explored to appraise the potential of this strategy and its usage within the institution. Both the challenges and benefits of this will be established, thus providing some assessment of opportunities to increase market research activity and potential segments of the student population.

Research question four (RQ4) – Which recruitment strategies are perceived as most effective when attracting students to a 'For Profit' HEP?

The existing literature provides a number of recruitment strategies designed to entice students to an institution. These need to be critically analysed in order to establish push and pull factors that would benefit both students and the institution during the recruitment process. In this part of the research, 'stakeholder' influence will be evaluated. This could potentially lead to a number of integrated marketing communication methods being identified and recommended in order to target various interested parties rather than the student only.

Once these questions have been answered then it is anticipated that future recruitment strategies will be effective and result in revenue and profitability for the chosen for-profit HEP.

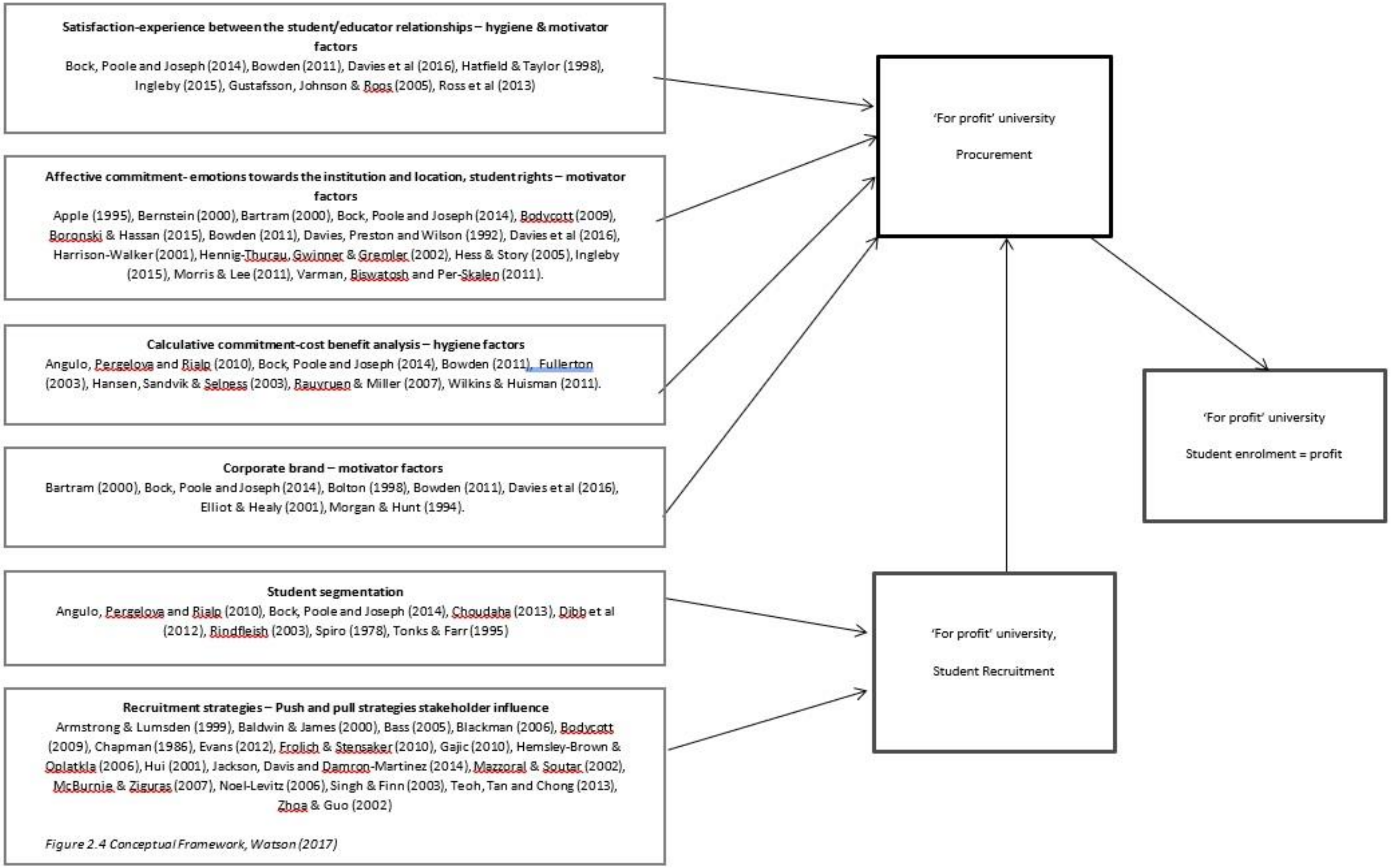

Figure 2.4 Conceptual Framework, Watson (2017)

2.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided an insight into the main themes of the thesis. Through a critical analysis of past theory, a number of relevant factors have been identified as useful for this research. Whilst the conceptual framework and research questions will direct the remainder of the study prior to this engagement with these factors, debate and consideration will be given to the impact that Government policy and changes within the education sector have had on the chosen case study HEP. It is essential that the foundations for the changes in delivery are identified and explored. As the chosen case study organisation's core competence and unique selling point has always been to provide learning online and at a distance then what factors led to the decision to move into blended (online-offline delivery) in 2016? Once justification has been demonstrated for this move by the case study HEP then the research will focus further on student recruitment and segmentation.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

3.0 Introduction

The focus of this chapter will be to demonstrate a coherent and systematic research strategy required to collect data relating to the answering of the four research questions posed in Chapter 2. These are:

Research question one (RQ1) – How can a 'For Profit' HEP's strategic decisions to expand and diversify its mode of delivery be understood in the contemporary context of the wider HEI sector?

Research question two (RQ2) – Which factors relating to enrolment do students perceive as important when applying for a course within the 'For Profit' HEP?

Research question three (RQ3) – Does segmentation strategy influence the student recruitment process in the 'For Profit' HEP, if so why?

Research question four (RQ4) – Which recruitment strategies are perceived as most effective in attracting students to the 'For Profit' HEP?

3.1 Research philosophy

There are a number of philosophical concepts within research. According to Mumford (2012), metaphysics, a major area of philosophy, begins with questioning, what knowledge is? If knowledge exists is it associated with anything else? How can we know? The initial questions based on 'existence' link closely to the philosophical concept of ontology and those questions associated with knowledge relate to epistemology. Smith (2003, p1), defines ontology as "the science of what is, of kinds and structures of objects, properties, events, processes and relations in every area of reality". In other words, ontology is that branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of 'being'. This view of ontology has been developed by a number of academics including Gruber (1993) who explores this concept and explains how ontology has been conceptualised, in that, reality is formed in terms of a set of relations. Bryman (2016) suggests that ontology examines the social world in order to determine if social actors are part of its creation or if the social world is external to individuals. Matthews and Ross (2010) support this view and examine the social world in terms of individual relationships and interactions with others. Both Smith (2003), and Matthews and Ross (2010), regard interactions as examples of 'storytelling' that attempts to make sense of the social world. Zagzebshi (2017) identifies knowledge as being in cognitive contact with reality, thus relations are formed. There are a number of ways to gain knowledge of the social world. Brechin and Siddell (2000), for instance, allude to acquiring knowledge through three main means, which include: theoretical knowledge, (collected through theoretical frameworks); experiential knowledge, (through experience being accumulated through practice over a period of time); and finally, empirical knowledge, (through qualitative and quantitative research).

A second important element of a research methodology is epistemology, this is the theory of knowledge. It is the theory of how it is that individuals come to have knowledge of their external world, (Bryman, 2015). Epistemology, as Curtis and Curtis explain (2011 p286), "generates differing attitudes to making and understanding observations of the social world." This is a challenge in the context of research processes. Matthew and Ross (2010) explain the difficulties in filtering the 'truth' from knowledge. As such, perceptions of reality may not always reveal the 'truth'. Blaikie (1993) suggests that 'truth' is tentative and only present in a particular time frame. As reality changes so do absolute 'truths'. There are a number of epistemological stances that can be taken when developing an appropriate methodology for research aimed at gathering knowledge and 'truths'. These include, (although not limited to): 'objectivism', 'realism', 'positivism', 'interpretivism' and 'constructivism'.

'Objectivism' involves making social observations based on facts in contrast to forming opinions developed through thoughts or feelings. May (2011) regards objectivism as ensuring that researchers remain independent of what is being observed. This approach is generally scientific and, as Gray (2014) explains though subjectivity can still be reflected upon, it must be done so in an objective manner. Similarly, according to Sarantakos (2013), 'positivism' is the observation and accumulation of gathering data through unbiased facts and often associated with realism, (Flick, 2015). ‘Realism’ accepts circumstances and seeks to deal with these circumstances appropriately. Both realism and positivism are similar to the objectivist approach and determine meaning through ‘actualities’ rather than being based on the ‘interpretation’ of the researcher. As Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) argue, positivism leads researchers to confirm the data being presented. There is a lack of interpretation and construction of meaning.

Kuhn (1970) argues in favour of an ‘interpretivist’ view, whereby the subjective meanings and interpretations of individuals are considered in depth. Rosenthal and Rosnow (2008) argue that ‘social constructivism’ is based on an interpretivist approach. Social constructivists approach epistemology and the philosophical debate to the critical extreme of social realism, (Curtis and Cutis, 2011). Social constructivists query science, facts, phenomena and independent observations. They argue that the social world is not reflective of any primacy of science and objectivity. Jaccard and Jacoby (2010), and Young and Collin (2004), explain the meaning of ‘knowledge’ from the social constructionists’ view and argue that reality is constructed in a person’s mind. What is perceived in reality at a particular point in time can alter as perceptions of the individual change. Somekh and Lewin (2011) also agree with this position. They view the social constructivist approach as building knowledge rather than perceiving ‘facts’ as unchanging and somehow deterministic.

Kelly (1963) suggests that individuals construct their world through events and are considered ‘rational beings’ with free will, therefore being able to direct their own destiny. He argues that the ability of cognitive complexity differs between individuals. He identifies 11 corollaries associated with cognitive constructs. It is useful to reflect on some of these when considering the constructivist approach. The construction corollary enables individuals to perceive events as they become reoccurring themes and therefore ‘fitting’ with the individual’s reality, (Proulx, 2008). The choice and experience corollaries confirm a person’s construct of reality and experience from the activities and events that they encounter. The individuality corollary enables the individual to make their own interpretations of an event, and this may differ to other people’s constructs of a similar experience. The commonality and sociality corollaries are formed based on social interactions. The former being a state of cognition, whereby individuals construct a similar meaning based on a similar experience. The latter are developed based on how the individual thinks others perceive their role to be, and therefore the individual will construct meaning and behave in a certain manner which is deemed socially acceptable, Cottone (2014). Schultz and Schultz (2013) caution this view of constructivism and suggest Kelly omits motivation and sentiment from his theory.

Social constructionism is similar to social constructivism, however, whilst constructivism focuses on the individual's acquisition of knowledge, experience and feelings through cognition, social constructionism explores creating reality and meaning through social actors and coordination with others, (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Cottone (2017) discusses similar views and suggests that interactions and relationships will affect the behaviours of individuals. Young and Collin (2004) define constructionism as knowledge being acquired through social processes rather than cognitive means.

After reviewing the various ontological and epistemological approaches to research, a social constructivist view will be emphasised during this thesis. As Young and Collin (2004) suggest there are commonalities in heritage between the constructivism and constructionism, and these are acknowledged in this research. Kelly's (1963) sociality corollary will be considered further when developing this philosophical position in the thesis. Participants in the research have been required to provide their own opinions on a number of factors ranging from developments within the HE sector through to the significance of emotional attachments when selecting a HEP. It has been noted that these views were taken at a specific point in time and thus it has been assumed that possible changes in opinions over a period of time could occur, (Blaikie, 1993). It is important to give careful consideration to the answers provided by participants and build up meaning from them, (Somekh and Lewin, 2011). Once meaning is constructed, justification for developments in practice and theoretical contribution can be pursued. Social constructivism will be used to seek knowledge from participants based on, as Zagzebski's (2017) suggests, that participants are in contact with cognitive reality and Kelly's (1963) view that human beings can be rational and form their own constructs. Whilst some of this knowledge may be influenced by social contexts, steering towards social constructionism, predominantly these interactions are considered to contribute to the participants' learning and development of individual knowledge.

In summary, although there are merits and failings in all philosophical research concepts, some are more appropriate depending on the research focus. Some positivist concepts have been considered, however, this thesis is focused primarily on interpretivism and constructivism because it is aimed at seeking opinions and perceptions of reality. The social constructivist view has been embraced as this has helped to bring out meaning and provide the ability to make some sense of the primary and secondary sources analysed.

As the researcher is associated with the case study HEP under investigation, there have been possible issues with respect to the researcher's own values relating to the main themes. Dudovskiy (2017) refers to this as 'axiology', and explains how the researcher's own values need to be considered at each stage of the research process. As a constructivist approach is taken, the researcher has aimed to be mindful of her own values and has acknowledged the danger of a possible degree of subjectivity when dealing with participants and constructing meaning. This has been particularly the case when dealing with the qualitative data collection. Bryman (2016) argues that researcher values are accepted in today's research, however, these need careful management in order to still separate them from the qualitative research. This issue has been acknowledged as having a possible effect on the research that may damage its credibility, and steps have been taken to reduce the effects of the researcher's subjectivity in interpreting the data. A reflective journal has been kept to record the feelings and views of the researcher as the data has been collected and the researcher immersed herself more closely in the investigation. This reflective process has been designed to enable the researcher to stop and closely consider what was being learned in the overall research process.

3.2 Research approach

Curtis and Curtis (2011) argue that research is either ‘fluid’, meaning that it is open to change and modification in sequence; or ‘fixed’, meaning that the researcher must not deviate from the planned order of sequence and processes. This research used largely the ‘fluid’ framing process. Although the research was built on current theory from the literature review which would tend to lean towards fixed framing, the development of the qualitative research methods enabled flexibility and openness. The conceptual framework located at the end of the literature review was used as a steering tool to develop the research strategy. Enhancements to this approach were requested from the participants as the intention was for new knowledge to be identified, thus leading to a degree of originality within my research approach.

Punch, (2014) argues that there are two important approaches to research. These are the deductive and inductive methods. Deductive methods are generally related to the objective and positivist philosophy and are developed to test current thinking and theory. The deductive approach is ‘downward-based’ on already developed and narrowly-focussed aspects of knowledge; in this sense the theory ‘comes first’. The inductive approach is the reverse. It involves developing theory based on empirical data (Gray, 2014).

Jebreen (2012) utilises the inductive approach and explains the benefits of such an approach as a research strategy. This researcher employs the inductive method to enable findings to emerge from the research results together with the identification of key themes. Strauss and Corbin (1998), also identify this as significant, as theory emerges from the data collected. Researching in this manner can lead to greater understanding of phenomena rather simply than testing hypotheses, (Jebreen 2012).

In this research, I have found the inductive approach more beneficial for the following reasons. Whilst the deductive approach is useful when employing a positivist methodology and testing set hypotheses, the inductive approach provides opportunities for the exploration and interpretation of participants’ views. This particular research has been guided by a number of themes developed from past empirical research, and therefore relates primarily to the assumptions of the inductive approach. A conceptual framework has been used to guide the research, however, there have been opportunities to develop this and build upon current theoretical thinking based on participant responses.

3.3 Research design

The research design outlines how the data will be gathered and measured. The structure of the research will be analysed and the duration or timeframe of the research will be examined in order to obtain credibility in sample size and validity. This section will also explore the differences, as well as the advantages, and disadvantages of adopting ‘quantitative’ and ‘qualitative’ research methods. Whilst both approaches have value in the research process, for a particular research strategy one may be more suitable than the other. Consequently, the research design is significant when considering which approach is the most suitable. The timelines and the duration of the research will also be examined.

3.3.1. Qualitative and quantitative methods

As indicated earlier there are largely two approaches regarding the collection of data. These are ‘qualitative’ and ‘quantitative’. Both will be examined. Gray (2014) identifies quantitative methods as logical and mathematical forms of data collection. They are usually presented in numerical format to enable statistical analysis to take place. Qualitative methods are the opposite and focus on making sense of patterns, themes and exposing meaning. Both approaches can use numerical data, (but the extent of this varies), and therefore there are some similarities between the two methods, (Richards, 2015).

The choice of approach can be linked back to the epistemological and ontological positions. The quantitative approach is generally associated with positivism and deductive methods. Qualitative research design is a logical corollary of the interpretive position and usually leads to exploratory studies based on, inductive methods. When considering both approaches it is important to assess the purpose of the method and how it will contribute to answering the research questions. Bryman and Bell (2011) discuss the use of quantitative research and how it forms a numerical understanding of the research findings, thereby taking a deductive position. Coughlan, Cronin and Ryan (2007) identify an approach very similar to Bryman and Bell (2011) and explain the importance of using appropriate statistical packages to ensure the results are accurately presented. The quantitative approach is used in experimentation and surveys, where specific measurements and equations are necessary to posit cause and effect (Creswell, 2003). Qualitative approaches tend to focus on language or cultural artefacts as carriers of individual and/or social meanings. (Cronje, 2009).

There are, however, criticisms of both approaches. Bryman and Bell (2011) outline some of the criticisms of quantitative approaches. For instance, sometimes there is a lack of interpretation of participants' opinions and questionable accuracy of the data. The reason for this is based on the assumption that all questions are constructed to mean the same thing to each individual in the entire sample, which may not actually be the case. Mays and Pope (1995) are critical of qualitative approaches and suggest that there are limitations as participant responses are formed anecdotally and may therefore be subject to participant and/ or researcher bias. They also argue that replication and generalisation of the research is limited as responses are so personal.

O'Dwyer and Bernauer (2014) argue that the uses of qualitative and quantitative research methods are dependent on what is to be achieved. They suggest that traditionally both approaches were used in research in order to assess varying propositions. For instance, quantitative research generally describes and explains a phenomenon, whilst qualitative research explores a phenomenon. Creswell (2003) argues that the qualitative approach to research is often based on constructivism and the creation of 'meaning' from individuals' social and historical experiences.

Whilst both approaches have their critics, Creswell (2003) posits the notion of mixing the methods in order to more fully comprehend a range of broad and in-depth data that contributes to the individual's understanding of the organisation. He further explains that mixed methods can help towards a degree of transferability of the findings and yet still provide some in-depth meaning of the data collected. Such a 'mixed' research strategy has been adopted in this thesis, although largely weighted towards qualitative methods.

Bryman (2016) argues that the use of mixed methods is effective if the methods are not considered separate and that they relate to each other, as is presented in this research thesis. The methods applied are largely qualitative in nature, however, there are elements of quantitative data collection and analysis. This is evidenced in the use of a survey. The purpose of this is to review the existing indicators already identified through the themes at the end of Chapter 2. It is suggested that this approach provides some useful appraisal of the existing theory and research, and consequently provides a somewhat deductive position, based on ordinal survey questions. However, the remainder of the survey is predominantly ‘open’ and qualitative in make-up, the coding for these answers will be explained further into the chapter. This, coupled with the in-depth interviews, directs the research in a largely inductive manner. The existing themes drawn from the literature are important to include in order to demonstrate comparisons and contrasts. However, it has also been essential to include open questions in the survey, in order to be able to explore individual perceptions and opinions. Consequently, it is hoped that this provides for the construction of meaning through exploration and investigation.

This latter approach is similar to that of Ellingson’s (2009) work on ‘crystallisation’. In crystallisation, research is reflected upon thus supporting in-depth interpretation. Qualitative approaches lead to in-depth content being gathered in a reflexive manner. Ellingson (2009) suggests the use of a continuum in order to capture progressively deeper interpretations of meaning, this continuum includes ‘impressionist’, ‘middle ground’ and ‘realist’ approaches to research. Under each of these categories there lie a number of options in order to develop epistemological stances, designs of research, methods and reflections. Shagoury (2011) also advocates the use of crystallisation in qualitative research and provides examples through the use of storytelling, metaphor and imagination. Ellingson (2014) argues for the application of crystallisation to support the use of standardised reporting of research and this can be enhanced with the additional narrative tools, thus enabling vivid accounts of ‘meaning’ to be constructed.

Due to its relevance and usefulness, it was decided that elements of Ellingson's (2009) concept of crystallisation would be integrated into this current research. As previously stated, the research approach emphasises the use of social constructivism. This fitted in well with crystallisation because the theory helps to establish in-depth meaning relating to the 'impressionist' and 'middle ground' categories. In these parts of the continuum, Ellingson (2009) further suggests a number of methods that could be useful in the collection of data. The methods most relevant to this current research include a case study approach, interviews, and thematic analysis. There has been however, some cross-over into the 'realist' category as surveys have also been included. To some extent the survey takes a slightly more positivist approach in its initial structure of ordinal scales. However, a number of later questions were open and therefore they can be related back to the 'middle ground' classification. With respect to Ellingson's (2009) 'impressionist' category, this is where the notion of 'creativity' is considered to enhance the standard data collection methods. Interviews and survey methods have been utilised and, within them, specific genres used in order to delve further into participants' views and experiences. These genres include the use of the first person, experiential accounts and personal reflections. Most of the questions required the participants to consider their own views and draw on prior experience. Some of the questions have also required the participants to reflect deeper and include their own personal feelings from prior experience, for example, of their thoughts on blended learning.

In addition to applying this research approach to the participants, crystallisation has also been used to provide a reflective tool and support for the researcher's close involvement with the data collected. Ellingson (2009) refers to the term 'stream of consciousness', whereby a narrative approach is taken when recording multitudinous streams of thoughts. Consequently, the researcher kept a journal, particularly throughout the data collection and analysis stages. This has served a number of purposes. Firstly, immediately after the interviews the researcher recorded stories and details of the session. This helped to summarise the main themes, points of interest, the feelings of the researcher and what was learnt. Secondly, the researcher reflected on her own approach to the interview, her role within the process, and how she thought the participants perceived her. Recording this detail enabled the researcher to adjust any approaches where necessary. For example, at one point jargon was used because the researcher assumed that the participants would be more familiar with this approach. This proved unhelpful, and so, in order, to offset any future misinterpretations, full words and explanations were provided for the participants. Likewise, the journal permitted some contemplation on the data.

Completing the journal was important. I was able to return to the journal and review it numerous times in order to re-confirm observations and understand the patterns emerging from the data more easily. This also helped me more with the interview transcripts and constructing meaning from participants' responses. Ultimately, all this helped to reduce any undue influence from the researcher's values and biases.

3.3.2 Case study

Yin (2009) defines the case study as research appertaining to an empirical investigation of a contemporary phenomenon. Before selecting the case study as the primary method for the current study, there was some assessment of its relevance and efficacy. This assessment was based on an examination of five research methods adapted from Yin (2014), who explores three conditions relating to research strategy. The research methods include: experiment, survey, archival analysis, histories and case study. Yin breaks down each of these methods and appraises them under the following headings: the type of research question; the control of behavioural events; and the focus on contemporary events. According to Yin (2014), the type of research question suggests the most appropriate research strategy to pursue. For instance, 'what' questions are usually more appropriately used in the survey approach; whereas, 'how' and 'why' questions tend to be more suitable in the broader case study approach because they suggest an element of further exploration to elicit answers. The research questions posited in this study are based largely on perceptions and influences, however as these are exploratory in nature they would fit more with Yin's suggestion of 'why' and 'how' questions, rather than factual, 'what' questions. It was decided that an overall case study approach was the most appropriate with regards to the thesis.

Yin (2014) also considers behavioural and contemporary elements. He suggests that case-studies are appropriate in a contemporary context and are very valuable with respect to gathering data via interviews. Using case studies is quite advantageous as behaviours, perceptions, and opinions are gathered at one point in time and help to discern ‘meaning’ from live events. As this research is aimed at attempting to understand the impact of changes within the HE sector, (with a specific focus on recruitment), the case study was, once again, deemed a most appropriate research strategy. Interviews were selected as one method to use within the chosen case study provider in order to gather data based on the perceptions and opinions of students and management.

In summary, Yin (2014) suggests the following when determining the use of case studies: ‘How’ and ‘why’ questions are being asked, contemporary events are being studied and the researcher has limited or no control over the study. These factors fitted perfectly with this current research, thus justifying the use of this approach when developing the overall research strategy. Apart from Yin, other researchers have provided useful outlines of the case study approach.

Gerring (2007), for instance, examines the term ‘case study’ at length. He refers to the ‘case’ as being a unit or moment in time and the ‘case study’ as being an in-depth study that can enlighten knowledge on any number of cases. Robson (2011) describes the case study approach as a case and research strategy in its own right. The purposes and uses of the case study are quite considerable and may contain a variety of perspectives. Hakim (2000) identifies a number of different types of case studies, including the individual case study comprised of one person, community and social group case studies. Hakim (2000) also explores the notion of studying particular organisations and institutions. There are a number of reasons why this type of case study is used such as the determination of best practices, policy implementation (which relates to Research Question 1 of this current thesis); management issues and perspectives (relating to Research Questions 1, 3 and 4 of the research), and finally, processes of change, (relating generally to this thesis and all four Research Questions). It would appear that Hakim’s (2000) approach and justification of case studies is in line with the views of Yin (2014), and is, therefore, additionally supportive of the case study approach taken in this study.

Stake (1995) argues that a case study should focus on the complexity of the case in question. With respect to this current study it was a chosen HEP. Such complexity relates to what Yin (2009) refers to as the ‘holistic case study’ or one unit of analysis. This term is appropriate to the current case study because the holistic approach taken reviews the entire Blended learning offering of the HEP as one unit, and takes a census approach.

3.3.3 Chosen case study - the ‘for-profit’ higher education provider

Whilst some preliminary introduction to the current case study organisation was provided in Chapter 1, I thought that this needed to be readdressed in order to identify the main reasons for selecting this particular provider. The HEP’s name remained anonymous because this was requested by the HEP’s research committee. Hence, any naming would have contravened the agreement and trust between the researcher and the organisation. Interestingly, one academic on the research committee thought that omitting the name from the research was futile. His argument was that any overarching themes and the position of the HEP within the marketplace could still be identified if investigated further by those privy to this piece of work. Nevertheless, the researcher adhered to such requests of confidentiality in order to protect the HEP’s commercial activity and also to safeguard the integrity of the research.

The HEP has been functioning within the higher education sector for approximately 30 years. It offers students around the world distance learning courses at undergraduate and postgraduate levels in partnership with established UK universities. It was acquired by a global educational organisation in 2016, having been sold by an American university. After providing some 50,000 students with higher education, (For-profit HEP, 2016), the HEP decided to pursue their own taught-degree awarding powers. As a consequence the provider was awarded this status in 2014. In August 2015 the institution was granted a full university title, and a year later launched itself as a university under a new name. Along with the new name, the HEP took the decision to continue to offer distance learning provision whilst simultaneously introducing 'Blended learning' into its pedagogic model. Blended learning incorporates the distance learning provision plus seminar on-campus support. The decision was made largely for commercial reasons. The HEP considered the need to develop a presence within the UK as important. Due to the increased competition in the international educational environment, the HEP sought alternative higher education markets on which to focus in the UK, hence the creation of the aforementioned blended delivery package.

The Blended learning offering includes 12 hours taught on-campus seminars over two days, plus access to the full suite of distance learning online materials. At present the blended offering is available in the West of London, Central London, Manchester and Birmingham. There are additional plans to enter into the German market and other English cities over the next three years.

Whilst there is much excitement and ambition with respect to these changes within the HEP, there are also challenges. These have prompted this research. As the newly-chartered HEP is relatively unknown, some concentration has been required on brand building. The Blended learning delivery feature is also new to the HEP and consequently, only four cohorts have been recruited to date. Whether this mode of delivery and the new approach to pedagogy is sustainable is a serious issue for the HEP. Programmes have been greatly influenced by employers' requirements in the work environment. The researcher suggests that this is a consequence of marketisation, and it will be interesting to explore and analyse students' reactions to this process and the programmes on offer. From a commercial perspective, it will also be pertinent to comprehend the motivations of students applying for the HEP and the various techniques the HEP is utilising with respect to the process of recruitment. Finally, understanding the actual reasons for the shift from distance learning to Blended learning will be investigated. The HEP is perceived as quite unique and as a disrupter in the market as it is providing a flipped classroom approach based on the core competency of developing and enhancing the distance learning offering. This therefore, would appear to be a reasonable choice for the case study approach and some results may be transferrable in the sector.

3.3.4 Advantages and disadvantages of using a case study

There are a number of advantages in using a case study approach to research. Robson (2011) suggests that a case study approach is suitable when some theoretical understanding of relevant themes is clear. This provides the foundations for the case to be focused and explored in detail. It is anticipated that Government policy, education reform, and marketisation have had a serious impact on the HEP. If this is the case then, recruitment, segmentation, and communication channels will require careful examination in order to enable the HEP to respond to market changes accordingly.

Case studies enable researchers to be able to gain access to and examine an organisation in depth and gain data that is not necessarily immediately accessible or known, (Bryman 1989, Yin 1984, Zainal 2007). This is an advantage of this type of research as it provides some indication as to why and how policy and market changes have impacted on the HEP, thus helping to direct responses to these issues that are applicable to the HEP, and possibly the wider higher education sector.

As the case study approach provides access to essential participants it can help to develop current thinking and further critical perspectives and insights, (Burgelman 1985). In addition, such a study can also allow a mix of methods to be employed in order to collect a range of both broad and in-depth data that contributes to making sense of reality within the organisation, (Zainal, 2007). Bryman (1989) explains that case studies are generally formed using a number of methods both qualitative and quantitative, which can lead to data being gathered that gives a more holistic view of the case. He goes further by suggesting that the case study can, not only, produce detailed results, but enable those involved, or those being recipients of the findings, to understand the organisation more holistically. Using the case study can grant specific insight into the organisation (Bryman 1989). Mitchell (1983) and Yin (1984) argue that the use of the case study can relate to existing theory and provide new insights that add to such theory.

Although there may be a number of advantages to the use of the case study there are also negative aspects. Burgelman (1985) and Tellis (1997), argue that there are issues of external validity when using only one case in the field. Bryman (1989) points out that the approach is limiting because the research findings are often considered not generalisable. In order to attempt to address this disadvantage, a study may include more than one case to study or a more prolonged study over a period of time may take place, which enables data to be tested and measured at different points, thus providing a platform for some data analysis and comparisons and contrasts to be drawn from it. In order to address this issue, this research approached cohorts of students over a number of time periods of enrolment, and whilst the results may not be wholly generalisable, it is anticipated that some of the results may be transferrable.

Zainal (2007) posits the view that those who suggest that case studies lack rigour are biased. There has been an attempt to address this problem in this thesis through the mix of methods used and the participant information provided to all involved in the research process. This information aims to highlight clearly the various participant roles and rights.

In summary, the case study approach has been selected for the research to enable the thorough gathering of data in order to answer the research questions. Using the case study approach has enabled valuable data to be collected in order to make an original contribution to knowledge and to inform practice for the HEP involved.

3.3.5 Duration of the research

This section will consider the most appropriate time period for the collection and analysis of the data. Two approaches will be reviewed: cross sectional research design and the longitudinal study.

Cross-sectional research design involves using one group at one point in time, and is generally associated with a case study approach (Bryman and Bell, 2011, Machin and Campbell 2005). It enables comparisons and contrasts of a number of themes at the same time from a number of different case study participants. There are two challenges to the credibility of using the case study approach and these include, transferability as a single case study, and the ability to capture a process of change within the case, however this was addressed as the survey took a census approach.

Levin (2006) argues that there are a number of advantages and disadvantages when using cross-sectional studies. Cross-sectional design is inexpensive, time challenges are reduced and a census approach to the research can be used, as in the case of this research. In contrast to these positive elements, it can also be argued that the research is only a snap shot in time and data may be missed, and possible bias can occur which can impact on the results of the research.

Longitudinal design, as defined by Robson (2011) occurs when data is collected over a period of time. Rajulton (2001), identifies longitudinal design with progress and change. Interestingly Pettigrew (1990), emphasises the importance of the longitudinal study when analysing organisational change. A benefit of the longitudinal study as noted by Bryman and Bell (2011), Menard (2002), and Rajulton (2001), is that as data is collected over a number of time periods, causal inferences can be made between what is being measured. As Rajulton (2001) indicates, life cycles are able to evolve within a longitudinal context and extensive, (all-embracing), and intensive, (rigorous), research is conducted, (Davies and Dale, 1994). Whilst there are a number of advantages in using this approach, the longitudinal research design is not without its challenges. There are cost implications in terms of resources and time. There are problems surrounding attrition and being given continued access to confidential information, (Rajulton, 2011). There are issues with recollection with respect to what was previously answered compared with what is currently being answered, (Davies and Dale, 1994). Halpern-Manners et al. (2014) explore this issue and attempt to examine the influence and effects the original questioning can have on subsequent re-questioning.

After carefully considering both the cross-sectional and longitudinal designs, the researcher determined that her approach steered more towards a cross-sectional approach. The strategy included questioning all participants only once. This was deemed appropriate for both the survey and interviews in order to collect current data which was relevant to answering the research questions. Such an approach was designed to ensure that the research participants were accessible and that a wider sample was able to be used to collect the data. It was decided that, in order to gather both extensive and intensive data, a survey would be used to capture all four different cohorts of students with regards to the time they enrolled on the course. The following intakes formed part of the research: October 2016, February 2017, June 2017 and October 2017. By the time the survey was developed and the research was conducted there were some cohorts that were retrospectively answering the questions, whilst others were newly enrolled students. Whether the research element is prospective or retrospective, it still provides depth and completeness for the study (Ruspini, 2000).

3.4 Sampling

With respect to the overall approach that is being taken in this particular study, sampling is a key element. Lines, Marcouse and Martin (2004) define a sample as a group of participants taken from the target population. Gliner, Morgan and Leech (2009) identify sampling as the process of selecting a group from a larger group of participants.

There are two ways in which a population can be sampled. Firstly, it can be sub-divided through probability sampling, whereby participants from the entire population are selected at random (Garson, 2012). Secondly, the dividing process can be achieved through nonprobability sampling, where participants are selected for a specific purpose or in a non-random manner, (Dudovskiy, 2016).

There are a number of advantages to sampling, as Gliner, Morgan and Leech (2009) explain. Sampling leads to a smaller group of participants being focused on in the research, leading to more in-depth data gathering. Sampling is also less costly in time and resources; and the quality of the data collected can be of real value as the researcher’s attention is focused on the sample, which aims to be representative of the total population. Brown (2006) agrees with these advantages and suggests further benefits of sampling including the fact that data can be analysed in a more efficient manner.

3.4.1 Types of sampling

There are various techniques that can be selected to target the population in order to draw a sample from it. These will be briefly discussed within this section and then examined in more detail in the following sections when looking applying the concepts to the current research.

The first four types of sampling can be placed within the 'probability' sampling category and are often associated with quantitative data collection. 'Simple random sampling' can be defined as enabling all individuals within the target population to have an equal chance of being selected, (Gliner, Morgan and Leech, 2009). This type of sampling is used when the target population is large and the sample will be chosen to be representative of the group. A more structured type of random sampling is the 'systematic random sample'. When this type of sampling is used the selection at random has parameters set within it, (Barreiro and Albandoz, 2001). Whilst this sampling technique appears more concise and focused, care still needs to be taken as those selected could end up displaying similar characteristics.

Gliner, Morgan and Leech (2009) argue in favour of a different perspective on sampling when they discuss 'stratified sampling'. This technique divides the population into clear 'variables' or 'strata'. 'Cluster sampling' occurs when a group is selected 'from within' and the research participants are randomly selected (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). 'Quota sampling' is a type of non-probability sampling that is used when the researcher arbitrarily selects a set number of participants from which to gather data. This involves an element of judgement in the selection of the participants to be involved in the process (Doherty, 1994). Whilst this technique is very useful with respect to cost savings, issues can arise with respect to the possibility of under-representation or omission of suitable participants from the research process, (Mathers et al. (2009)).

Robson (2002) discusses the concept of 'dimensional sampling'. This approach is similar to quota sampling, as it integrates characteristics from each dimension into the research, however, this method is often associated with qualitative data collection. For instance, whilst this research did not set quotas it did include students from all cohorts of students in order to capture the views and opinions from all intakes. This research also elicited responses from all levels of management.

Researchers such as Breckenridge and Jones (2009), Charmaz (2006), Glaser and Strauss (1967), and Strauss and Corbin (1998) discuss 'theoretical sampling', which involves purposively identifying participants as the research theory and concepts are emerging. 'Purposive sampling' entails the researcher selecting a sample that serves a specific purpose, (Robson, 2002). Gliner, Morgan and Leech (2009) argue that this sampling technique attempts to draw on a suitable sample in order to serve the purpose of the research.

Gliner, Morgan and Leech (2009) use the term 'purposeful' sampling as a sampling approach and this is often used in qualitative research. Both purposive and purposeful sampling are the same as they are based on judgement and selecting participants to gather information-rich data, (Patton,1990). Morse (2000) discusses purposeful sampling as a means of gathering quality data. She also suggests that purposeful sampling can lead to 'shadow' data being collected, (that is participants talking about the experience of others), that can contribute to creating meaning from the data gathered. However, Morse (2000) does suggest applying caution with respect to the accuracy of this and so further examination through the use of secondary sampling to target these additional participants, (those discussed by participants), can help to determine the accuracy of the research. Without this clarity, the research process can lack rigour. Coyne (1997) summarises the technique by arguing that all sampling within qualitative research is purposeful.

The preceding narrative provides an overview of different techniques that were considered in sampling the participants in this piece of research. Sections 3.4.2 and 3.4.3 posit an outline of my data collection methods.

3.4.2 Interview participants

The interview is a key element of this research study. Curtis and Curtis (2011) argue that interviews are 'case-centric', which means accessing the most suitable cases or sample of participants is crucial for the collection of relevant data. These researchers recommend purposive sampling to be the most appropriate sampling strategy. Patton (2002) also argues in favour of purposive/purposeful sampling, as he considers participants should be 'information-rich' and consequently they must be selected very carefully in order to ensure that the participants' contributions are of value to the research. Those selected need to be capable of answering the research questions effectively. Consequently the sample has to fulfil a clear purpose and thus must be carefully and specifically targeted. Dimensional sampling was also deemed useful in order to ensure that all levels of management contributed to the research.

In the current study there were two aspects of the sampling process for the management interviews. A mixed methods approach was adapted for the reasons that are outlined by Teddie and Yu (2008), as mixed methods sampling can develop from the research questions. This research approach can also demonstrate ethical rigour with regards to identifying any possible risks to the participants, and can contribute towards the establishment of validity or transferability. The two sampling techniques selected were firstly, 'purposive' or 'purposeful', that is participants were selected on their level of relationship to the central themes of the thesis (Teddie and Yu, 2008), and are considered to be 'critical cases' (Patton, 2002). A second factor emerged with 'dimensional' sampling. As Bailey (2008), argues, this type of sampling specifies all dimensions of interest, thus leading to all levels of managers being involved in the research sample. Bailey (2008) argues that dimensional sampling is preferable when dealing with a small sample of research participants in order to ensure that each dimension and the main characteristics of the sample population are accounted for. Brewer and Hunter (2008) argue that the quality of the data gathered and the confidence that this sampling process instils in the research process is due to the 'expert' participants who have been selected.

Based on their levels of pre-existing knowledge of the provider, eight management employees were selected to be part of the interview data gathering phase. The sample was comprised of employees at different levels of responsibility within the HEP, from executive level to operational level. The sample was selected with integrity to ensure that those recruited were able to answer the questions and provide an open discussion on the themes from the topic guide. Morse (2000) argues that the ‘quality’ of data needed justifies a smaller sample size and, therefore, eight appropriate participants were confirmed as respondents for the research. Baker and Edwards (2012) have collected views on the optimum size for qualitative research from a range of sociologists. The views with respect to sample sizes ranged from one to 500. The researcher assessed a range of participants and concluded that eight would be significant and sufficient to meet the ‘critical case’ criteria, as suggested by Patton (2002). The following illustrates the breakdown of the participants.

Table 3.1 Interview participants with allocated codes

Code	**Management Level**
A	Executive
B	Executive
C	Executive
D	Middle
E	Operations
F	Senior
G	Senior
H	Senior

Those at an executive and senior level are responsible for the development of strategy and the introduction of the blended delivery model. The executive level managers have been involved with external agencies governing the institution. The selection of these participants was based on their knowledge of changes in higher education and the development of marketisation. Those managers at a senior and middle level are involved at the practical level of implementing strategies. They take part in discussions with the executive and operational teams in order to provide advice and guidance to the various functional areas within the institution. The operational level managers are generally utilised to ensure the decisions made at the executive level are implemented daily. These participants add value when day to day operations are under consideration. However, they have some knowledge of educational reform and change.

These participants were recruited with a degree of caution. Firstly, would they have sufficient knowledge to be able to cover the agenda on the topic guide in full? Secondly, would they be flexible enough in their responses to provide meaningful data and would the participants have the actual time to partake in a 45 minute interview? To address these issues the researcher provided the participants with the topic guide that would be covered during the interview. These were emailed to the participants with their invitations prior to the interviews. All eight participants responded positively and a follow up email was sent with further details of the interviews and a glossary of key terms, such as ‘segmentation’ and ‘communication’. The glossary was produced in response to feedback from the pilot study.

3.4.3 Survey participants

The survey was completed over a number of enrolment time periods. Because student numbers were manageable, it was decided to collect information from the entire population. Marchin and Campbell (2005) refer to this as a complete sample, (a form of census). The use of a census, according to Zelin (2011), confirms that all the participants are representative. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), (2013), presents a number of advantages with regards to this approach, including the fact that censuses provide no sampling errors and that small sub groups can be more easily identified. ABS (2011), however, identifies a number of shortfalls to this approach, such as negative consequences with respect to high levels of time and cost. Banda (2003) discusses sources of non-sampling error rates and considers two problems relevant to this research approach. Firstly, with reference to coverage or framing errors, that some participants may be overly covered in comparison to others, for instance, in relation to demographic make-up. This may lead to bias in the census and the under-representation of some groups. The second problem relates to non-response rates. If the full census is not covered effectively then this also could bring about the under-representation of some groups compared with others. This could lead to bias and a lack of balance. Although these challenges of a census, (or complete sample), were considered, it was decided on balance that this research should continue to include this approach. The justification for this included the time period of 12 months, no additional cost due to the increased number of participants, and the use of the standard questions at the end of the survey designed to classify the demographics. These will be considered in depth as part of the later data analysis.

The average size of the recruited student cohorts were between 40-650 students in all study centres. Not all students may have wanted to be involved in the research. By accommodating this slippage in participation in the later analysis this issue was dealt with. Gliner, Morgan and Leech (2009) argue that a sample >500 is an appropriate sample size for reducing errors. They also emphasise the importance of response rates and recommend a minimum response rate of >50% in order for the data to be considered credible and accurate. The distribution and follow up of the survey will be discussed further in section 3.5.3., which follows.

To sum up, selecting the most appropriate sampling technique was essential for this research. The use of multi-method sampling for the interview participants and census techniques for the survey were deemed the most appropriate and suitable for the study. Once the sampling techniques were implemented, the researcher achieved some successes, but also some limitations. The interviews were conducted within the anticipated timeframe and the participants were very forthcoming with their knowledge and experience. It was interesting to listen to the stories and different accounts from the HEP's 'experts'. Overall, the interviews flowed well and there were few difficulties encountered when conducting them.

The survey data collection and sample size, however, did produce some issues for the researcher. Initially, the survey link was promoted on the virtual learning environment to which all 977 students would have access. After the first two weeks of the link being posted the researcher had only received 22 replies. When the researcher asked for a mail merge to be sent out to students via the HEP's student support the response was not favourable. The reason given was pressure due to high workload. As an alternative approach, the researcher acquired a list of all 977 email addresses of the students and duly sent personal emails to request their support and completion of the survey. This took quite a considerable amount of time to action as mail merges could not be used remotely.

Contacting students directly created another potential issue with regards to subjectivity and data protection. To ensure that the students' email addresses were used lawfully and fairly, as per the Data Protection Act 1998 (OGL nd) and the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (Disclosure Barring Service (DBS), 2018) the researcher sent the request for completion from her work email account, rather than through her studying institution. This was to ensure that students were not concerned that their email addresses had been given to anyone outside of the chosen HEP. The use of her work email would include the provider's name and therefore helped to reassure the students regarding their privacy. Although ethically and morally this seemed the 'right thing to do', it did pose challenges for the researcher in terms of the possible misconceptions from some of the students and possible influence of the inclusion of the providers name on the email. Potentially this could have led to students not wanting to take part in the survey for fear of the research results being shared with the HEP. This issue was addressed via an explanation of the reasons for using the email account and the firm reassurance that anonymity and confidentiality would always be maintained. As Bryman (1998) states ensuring ethical issues are taken into consideration helps to maintain the safety and confidentiality of the participants, the researcher, and the thesis.

3.4.4 Response rates

Of the 977 students approached to take part in the survey, 512 students responded. SurveyMonkey was used to gather the data. An advantage of this functionality is that it can set parameters. One such parameter was to deter students from progressing through the survey if they missed a question. This meant that all 512 surveys were completed. However, their content varied as some open questions received 'not applicable', 'no', or a 'dash' responses. Although this was not considered helpful to this research, it was the students' right to answer according to their thoughts and feelings about a topic. The total response rate was 52% of the entire population. As previously indicated, there were challenges when drawing from the census and this was with regards to the demographic make-up of those who answered. In order to address this problem, the data was examined with respect to those who responded to the answers, together with the valid and cumulative percentages where appropriate.

With respect to the interviews, all eight were successfully conducted. The sample was purposeful and dimensional, providing input from specific targeted areas of the business, in other words, from executive to operational management levels. (Please note that the responses from the interviews included in Chapter 4 are verbatim. Thematic themes from the interviews can be found in Appendix L, and lengthier extracts from them can be located in Appendix M.)

3.5 Data collection methods

This section is divided into three main areas covering a three stage approach to the data methods. Within each section there is an identifiable link to the research questions. Both primary and secondary sources are examined.

Cook and Reichardt (1979) justify combining both 'qualitative' and 'quantitative' methods to enhance data collection. It is suggested that mixed methods are now an often expected approach in evaluation and policy evaluation research, (Bryman and Bell, (2011), and Bryman (2016)). Yin (2014), also considers the use of mixed methods in a case study to answer the research questions. Consequently, it is anticipated that richer content may be collected. More than one method can collect a substantial amount of data in order to be able to comprehensively analyse the findings. According to Bryman (2016), mixed methods helps to reduce bias because more than one method is being used to collect the data (although, this also is dependent on other factors, for example, how well the data collection is carried out by the researcher). A mixed methods approach can also produce greater confidence in the research findings, (Clarke and Dawson, 1999, Jick, 1983 and Webb et al 1966).

Despite the perceived advantages of these methods, the views of academics on the use of the mixed methods approach are split. Favouring such methods, Giddens (2002), refers to mixed methods as strengthening the post-positivist paradigm arguing that qualitative data collection methods are a useful add-on. However, Bergmann (2008) questions how mixed methods can actually work in practice as the ontological and epistemological paradigms do not appear to allow for both to come together. Researchers often spend time justifying their philosophical approaches, however, any attempt to use a mix of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods can blur the nature of the research approach. Bergmann (2008) argues in favour of applying ‘Foucauldian discourse’ as an example of a successful mixed methods strategy. In this example, a post-positivist approach is adopted in order to understand the language and text, however, an interpretivist approach runs parallel to this approach. Bryman and Bell (2011), argue that there are dangers in diluting the research process by using too many methods. I have considered this argument, and I still think that my approach, using two sources of primary data collection and secondary sources, is the most appropriate strategy in respect of answering the research questions.

Fetters and Molina-Azorin (2017) discuss the Mixed Methods Integration Trilogy, whereby philosophical assumptions, methodological assumptions, and methods are brought together. There is an assumption that different philosophical and theoretical approaches can be utilised in different parts of the research process (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, Johnson and Christensen, 2014). For instance, this research involves taking a predominantly social constructivist approach because ‘meaning’ is continuously constructed from the answers provided by the research participants. To accommodate the themes identified in the conceptual framework the research took a slightly more positivist approach through ordinal scales, in order to be able to gather data and assess the factors that influence student recruitment. Mixed methods have also been used when ascertaining the strategy for the initial literature review. ‘Scoping’ was employed to identify relevant texts on the central themes of the research, (Arksey and O’Malley, 2005, Fetters and Molina-Azorin, 2017). These studies included positivist, critical realist and social constructivist approaches using qualitative and quantitative methods.

As previously discussed in section 3.4, ‘multi-method’ sampling has been utilised, (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009), whereby a number of sampling techniques have been used in order to recruit participants and gather content relevant data. These were the ‘census’ technique to gather data for the survey, and ‘purposive/purposeful’ and ‘dimensional’ approaches employed to identify suitable interview participants. In this study the objective is to derive ‘meaning’ from the selected HEP case study, hence the selection of this particular approach.

Denzin (1970) highlights different approaches to mixing methods, and terms these as ‘triangulation’. It is argued that the use of more than one method will lead to obtaining a more complete set of data to assist more holistic and credible conclusions being gleaned from the research, (Wilson, 2016). There are some researchers, such as Mertens and Hesse-Biber (2012), who argue that ‘triangulation’ is an inherent benefit of using mixed methods, adding further credibility to the findings. Fielding, (2012) considers the notion of ‘convergent validation’. This occurs when the methods used to collect data seem to correspond with each other. If they do, the findings are considered more trustworthy. However, if they do not, Fielding (2012) puts forward the possibility of multiple errors. With respect to this possible issue, the use of the methods and how they might contribute to answering the research questions in this study have been closely and carefully examined before being applied.

‘Data triangulation’ has been considered relevant and, consequently, it has been applied to this research. The intended data collection methods justified below illustrate the use of both primary and secondary sources within alternative contexts over different time periods. According to Denzin, (1970), ‘theory triangulation’ involves the use of varying perspectives to analyse data. It is this method that has been used for the purpose of data interpretation in the following data analysis chapter.

Before moving on to discussing the data collection methods it seems pertinent to consider the advice provided by Bryman and Bell (2011) prior to developing any mixed methods approach. In the first instance, in line with ‘mono-methods’, (single data collection methods), the mixed methods must be thoroughly planned to yield credible results. The methods employed must relate to the research themes and questions. As already stated, a case study approach has been taken. The approaches to data collection are complementary to each other as Hochschild (1989) and Zamanou and Glaser (1994) argue. Using these methods in combination is important in ensuring that the whole research process operated in an effective and efficient manner, (Bryman, 2016).

3.5.1 Stage one: literature review and secondary sources

As indicated in Chapter 2, a literature review has been completed and this has helped to identify a number of themes in the framing of this research and will provide some contributory theory when analysing the data in the next chapter. The review was completed for a number of reasons as suggested by Bryman and Bell (2011), Booth and Dixon-Woods (2004), Rugg and Petre (2007), and Robson (2011). These researchers all focus on the importance of the review in respect of gaining an understanding of the central themes already in existence to avoid duplication; to avoid mistakes made during previous empirical studies; and to provide awareness of theoretical and methodological approaches which might help to develop a research strategy, (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2000).

All of these points were considered when completing the review. Consequently, the framework at the end of Chapter 2 has been based solely on the evidence collected and analysed from the existing theory. A variety of sources have been utilised when collecting the literature. Cooper (1998) argues, using only formal literature such as peer-reviewed journals can sometimes lead to other useful sources being missed. To counter this, informal sources of literature have also been considered beneficial to the research. These include internet sources and reference to existing institutional documentation. The researcher has made a careful and conscious search of credible sources from the internet. For instance, Wikipedia was not deemed reliable as this can be updated by anyone and is not necessarily written by world experts, (The Guardian, 2017).

Hakim (2000), defines ‘secondary analysis’ as the re-analysis of data already collected by another. It can be utilised effectively in research to re-address data sets and analyse case studies. Fielding and Fielding (2000) and Glaser and Struss (1967) observe a cost advantage of re-using data. Gathering qualitative feedback for instance can be costly both in time and resources, and so using secondary sources may reduce this. For the purpose of this research to some extent secondary sources have been used to address a number of the research questions, particularly RQ1, RQ3 and RQ4. There has however, been very limited re-analysis of this data. Market research and admissions documentation used by the chosen HEP to segment the market and monitor recruitment have been revisited in order to provide background information and to support and/or challenge responses from both the interviews and questionnaires.

There are of course disadvantages associated with the use of secondary sources. Robson (2011) argues the following with respect to these disadvantages: the ‘quality’ of the secondary source may need to be assessed, for instance, where did the data originate and who gathered it? This is also revealed by Johnston (2014). Are there limitations to the data collected, and is there any possible bias in the measurement and presentation of the results? (Clarke and Cossette, 2000). If secondary sources not examined in adequate depth there is the possibility that the primary data collected might be duplicated. Confidentiality clauses and lack of access to the original data and participants can also pose problems with regards to using the secondary information for further research, (Johnston, 2014). Ethical approval and access was given for sources to be re-used for this current research.

3.5.2 Stage two: in-depth interviews

Kvale (2007) identifies the interview as a knowledge gathering process between the interviewer and interviewee. Dexter (1970) refers to the interview as a conversation that has a reason. There are various types of interview. One of these is the ‘structured’ interview, whereby questions are fixed and are not usually modified. Clarke and Dawson (1999) argue that the rigidness of this approach ensures uniformity. All participants are exposed to the same questions and stimuli, thus, answers are pre-determined and easily compared, coded and measured. The ‘semi-structured’ interview is used when questions are only partly structured. This form of interview deliberately enables discussion and gives freedom to the participant to explore the questions and responses in greater depth, creating meaning for themselves, in dialogue with the researcher (Newton, 2010). There are challenges with respect to this form of interview, a significant one being the interviewer effect. According to Gong and Aadland (2009), this can occur when the interviewee is unfamiliar with the content of the questions being asked and thus may respond in a way that is influenced by the interviewer’s characteristics, such as his or her gender, age or body language. Cherry, (2017) explores the issue of ‘demand’ characteristics. This refers to how the participant may react to the interview in an ‘assumed’ manner. This can occur if the interviewer provides hints as to how to answer a question. Consequently, responses may deviate from the true intentions and feelings of the participants. Providing participants with clear information about the research and their actual role can help to overcome this problem, as can having a purposive sample and a reflexive approach to the research.

A more flexible approach is the in-depth interview. Lofland and Lofland (1984) refer to this as the 'intensive' interview. The participant has the opportunity to express his or her own thoughts, (Boyce and Neale, 2006). Yin (2014) refers to this type of interview as the 'in-depth inquiry'. Mathers et al. (1998) argue that for in-depth interviews to be effective there must be only a limited number of topics discussed. There are a number of advantages associated with an in-depth interview. These include: being able to focus on one person's response without distraction, and enabling rapport-building, as the participant may be more at ease due to the nature of the topics and themes being explored. The in-depth interview also allows for full and valuable content to be collected because processes are more fluid and additional questions can be included, (Boyce and Neale, 2006). Clarke and Dawson (1999) explain that the main advantage of this interview is the openness of questions. Patton (1987) argues that the in-depth interview is advantageous when individual judgements and opinions are required in interviewee responses.

Unfortunately there are also challenges with in-depth interviewing. Trust, for instance, builds between the interviewer and interviewee and therefore the interviewee may share confidential information beyond the original ethical clearance process. Curtis and Curtis (2011) argue that this may become an issue as it is an added burden to the interview process and can be difficult to manage. Keeping the discussion on track is also an added pressure on the interviewer, (Granot, Brashear and Motta, 2012). An important requirement in the interview is to eliminate any possible biases of the researcher, (Boyce and Neale, 2006). This requires careful management and structured data analysis in order to ensure appropriate filtering of data, this will be discussed further in this chapter. Boyce and Neale (2006) argue that in-depth interviews are time-intensive and, because samples are small, generalisations and transferability are difficult to demonstrate.

After some deliberation, I decided that given that a case study approach was being taken and, with a limited sample interview size, it was decided that the in-depth interview was considered the most appropriate method. Despite the use of this method, I also decided to apply some principles of what is termed the 'expert' interview into the structure. Flick (2009) discusses the use of the expert interview and so using 'experts', such as the management employees from within the chosen HEP, was considered appropriate for the in-depth interviews. The reason was that this would lead to useful in-depth interview data being collected. Using both in-depth and expert processes to form the interview seemed to work well, however, as Flick (2009) argues, there are challenges associated with expert interviews, for instance the 'expert' may prove not to be as knowledgeable as expected on a topic and thus may misrepresent him or herself. To counter this risk, I selected the participants very carefully through purposeful sampling and encouraged the expression of both facts and feelings as part of the exploratory study. The use of the researcher's reflective journal was used to record the perceived feelings and expressions of the participants. These were then revisited and added to once the recordings were listened to on a number of occasions. This was to identify the formation of the research themes and patterns that were emerging.

Alternative methods were also considered, such as the use of focus groups. These were considered to be useful for eliciting ideas in small groups of participants. They were also an effective way in which to gain responses in order to establish and develop more detailed data collection methods, such as one-to-one interviews, (Gliner, Morgan and Leech, 2009). However, after careful consideration, this type of method was disregarded after the realisation that more meaningful responses could be obtained from one-to-one interviews directly. A reason for this decision was that some 'fluidity' was required from the participants, plus the need to offset any possible feeling of discomfort when some junior level employees were being mixed with executive management in a focus group.

The in-depth or qualitative interview was therefore selected as a means of gathering data. Boyce and Neale (2006), and Casell and Symon (1994) argue that in-depth interviews are invaluable when the interview is based on content with knowledgeable experts. For this specific piece of research, the themes of changes in mode of delivery and pedagogy were known to the staff throughout the organisation. In addition segmentation, recruitment, and communications were all concepts and processes with which the participants were familiar. Nonetheless, the degree of staff knowledge of such processes tended to differ depending on the participants' role within the HEP. Those at the strategic and executive level, for instance, tended to know more about education reform, whereas those at an operational level were more inclined to know more about such things as social media response rates.

Cassell and Symon (1994) argue that the perceptions of participants are required if the research is to be meaningful. Consequently, it was deemed important to try to understand how individual participants answered and responded to the interview themes. These responses were then related back to the original research questions. The interviews were set at three sequential stages: a beginning, middle and end. They were managed in the manner set out below.

The beginning: Whilst the participants were aware of whom the researcher was within the HEP, the role of the interviewer was formally introduced. An overview of the research was provided and the participant information sheet was shared once again, (List, 2007). This sheet had been sent previously to the participants via email. To ensure that any problems that might arise were dealt with, the information sheet was addressed again at this stage of the interview. It was hoped that this initial introduction would alleviate any pre-interview nerves. The functional elements of the interview were also explained in terms of the recordings that were being taken. McLellan, MacQueen and Neidig (2003) emphasise the importance of seeking consent and authorisation when taping interviews. They argue that recording interviews may not be appropriate when the topics are sensitive. This was considered. However, the nature of the topic list did not pose such issues in this research. Although a Dictaphone was used throughout the interviews in order to collect responses, written notes were also made during the interviews. Curtis and Curtis (2011) argue that these notes alert the interviewer to important points to reconsider once the interview is complete. This approach was adopted.

During each interview, the researcher was aware of non-verbal cues that may have indicated when the participant was uncomfortable with respect to any of the questions, or whether clarification was being sought. The interviewer became aware of certain cues, such as folding arms and legs, which may have indicated that the interviewee was experiencing a degree of uneasiness and was becoming guarded. Touching ears and noses might have indicated a degree of nervousness. In these situations the researcher continued with the interview and attempted to reassure the participant through active listening techniques, (Corimer and Corimer 1979, Guba and Lincoln 1981, Mathers et al., 1998). As Granot, Brashear and Motta (2012) indicate, it is important in the in-depth interview to ensure that a rapport is built between the interviewer and interviewee so that the conversation can be effortless, personal experiences can be recalled, and reflections made. Mathers et al. (1998) provide guidance on the use of probing for clarification on points where required. Granot, Brashear and Motta (2012) also argue for the importance of including follow-up questions. However, these should not be leading questions. McCracken (1988) advises allowing participants adequate time to tell their story, but some control must be included in order to ensure that the main themes on the topic list are maintained. This approach to the interviews was taken. Participants were given time to answer, probing was used and non-verbal cues were considered. Most of the interviews were in line with the 45 minute pilot study of the questions. This will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

There are a number of potential problems in the interview process, as Cassell and Symons (1994) indicate. These include: uncommunicative interviewees who are unwilling to cooperate and engage with the questions; over-communicative participants who, in effect, ‘waffle’, and ‘would-be’ interviewers, who attempt to ask for the researcher’s opinions. In order to address these problems a number of steps were taken. Firstly, uncommunicative participants were excluded from the interviews through the sampling process. All of the participants were invited to take part in the research, the main purpose of which was explained in the participant information sheet prior to the interview taking place, (Garnot, Brashear and Motta, 2012). With respect to over-communicative participants, these were managed in a professional, but friendly manner. The researcher subtly directed the participant back to the topic guide for the interview, (Lawlor et al., 2006). Finally, any would-be interviewers were advised, at the ‘beginning stage’ of the interview, that any questions directed at the researcher would only be addressed at the end of the interview.

At the end of the interview the researcher assessed the adequacy of the data collected. Using the note-taking technique provided prompts for this. Closing statements from the researcher were made in order to debrief the participant with respect to the next stages of the process, (these being data analysis and dissemination of the results). The reassurance of confidentiality was again confirmed. Any final questions or queries the participant had for the researcher were answered, (Mathers, Fox and Hunn, 1998). The researcher ensured that the participants were satisfied with the process and outcome. If he or she was not satisfied then this could have placed the interviewee at risk of being withdrawn from the research, which would have been a waste of time and effort for all concerned.

Before conducting the interviews, questions were designed in such a manner as to be non-directive (McCormick and James, 1988). When conducting in-depth interviews the questions must be open and case-centric, allowing the respondent to establish what is meaningful (Cassell and Symon, 1994). For example, it would have been inappropriate to ask participants, “It looks as though the ‘disengaged learner’ segment did not work, why do you think this is?” A more suitable question is “from your experience of the For-Profit HEP’s segmentation strategy for the Blended learning offer, what do you think have been its successes and shortcomings, and why?” This framing of the question was designed to enable the participants to open up about their own experiences, advance their own knowledge, and provide their own opinions on the strengths and weaknesses of strategies, (Yow, 1994).

Being flexible is imperative when conducting in-depth interviews, and it is quite common during the interviews for the topics to flow according to how the participants want them to rather than in the strict topic order as set out in the interview guide, (Cassell and Symon, 1994). Some questions may also not need to be asked as the conversation may have already covered them. Questions will generally commence in a rather informal and straight forward manner in order to place the participant at ease. For instance, I1 refers to overarching changes within the HEP. All employees, regardless of status, will know that the university has changed its name. More complex questioning will tend to develop as the interview progresses. Cassell and Symon (1994) also suggest using multiple questions, for example, I4. This is designed to create a more in-depth discussion from the participant.

The table in Appendix A sets out the interview questions and illustrates their relationships to the conceptual framework and research questions. The topic guide for the questions followed educational reform and changes within the HEP, segmentation, communication, and student recruitment.

3.5.3 Stage three: survey

Tobin and Flynn (2017) explain the meaning of the term ‘questionnaire’. The questionnaire is generally a pre-populated list of questions and they are used often in social surveys. Surveys vary in size and appearance depending on the data being collected.

Mather, Fox and Hunn (2009 p5) refer to “trend surveys, which take repeated samples of different people each time, but always use the same core questions”. This approach has been used to execute the current survey in order to answer questions, RQ2 and RQ4, and has involved the students who were based in the Blended learning environment of the HEP. As already indicated in section 3.4, the student participants were involved in the census, or complete target population. The population size was 977 participants. The questionnaire was distributed using SurveyMonkey. This is an online survey designed to collect data from various participants in a systematic manner. The advantage of this survey tool is that it automatically exports the data to SPSS and so provides a good base for statistical analysis.

According to Clarke and Dawson (1999), the survey is the most frequently used data collection method in research. Surveys can be used ‘en masse’ to collect a range of data over a variety of disciplines. They take many different forms, from postcards to multiple paged papers, (Hoinville and Jowell, 1987). Denscombe (1998) considers this method as a ‘one off’ because participants will very rarely want to be involved in a second survey. Thus, the survey structure must be right first time. Vaus (1996) argues that surveys are not easily structured and that careful thinking and development of them is essential in order to be able to collect the data necessary to appropriately address and answer the research questions. For this reason a ‘pilot study’ was carried out in order to ensure that the questions were clear, unambiguous, meaningful to the participant, and able to be cross-referenced to the research questions. Clarke and Dawson (1999) agree with Vaus (1996). They argue that there is likely to be a potential lack of enthusiasm and participation if the questions are ambiguous. A low response rate is not ideal when using a case study because the focus is already narrow and this further limits its scope with respect to the findings.

Unlike the qualitative in-depth interview, the survey was more structured. Instructions were provided to all participants prior to its completion in order to indicate that the questions followed a logical sequence. In the survey, participants were not able to skip and return to questions. They were required to complete the questions as they progressed through the survey.

Clarke and Dawson (1999) argue that the use of both ‘open’ and ‘closed’ questions is important when developing surveys. These researchers argue that bias can be reduced with the use of more closed questions. May (1993) acknowledges the value of closed questions, but directs caution with respect to these questions and sets parameters on this type of questioning in order to ensure that they are comprehensive enough to gather adequate data and that they are mutually exclusive of each other. To complement the closed questions, a series of open-ended questions are considered helpful, although care is advised when participants are completing the questionnaire on their own. The use of open questions requires participants to have some degree of capability in the provision of written views and opinions, (Clarke and Dawson, 1999). Vaus (1996), further highlights the complexities of open questions. He argues that they are better answered in a face to face setting.

In the case of this current research, issues surrounding completion were assessed and the problems relating to open and closed questions were addressed. The survey was kept quite short and structured, offering a number of set answers based on the themes identified from the literature in Chapter 2. As Vaus (1996) indicates, these were ‘forced-choice’ responses (pre-written). However, participants still had options from which to choose. A series of open questions were also included. Some discretion was used when developing these questions because the distribution method was online rather than face to face. However, they were also kept to a minimum and placed towards the end of the survey, (Vaus, 1996).

To avoid any miscommunications when completing a survey, Vaus (1996) and May (1993) make a number of recommendations when devising the questions. The first is to avoid the use of jargon. For this thesis, jargon was not used as some students were very new to the institution. The pilot study revealed omissions in this respect together with other identifiable errors, which were rectified prior to the survey being executed. Another recommendation is to avoid leading questions. Appendix B sets out the survey questions. This indicates that leading questions were not, in fact, included. Double barrelled questions were also removed from the questionnaire in advance. Originally questions S6, S7, S8 and S9 were combined. However, I realised that this would add little to the data analysis as stakeholders could not be effectively identified, (Appendix B). Robson (2011) confirms this argument and advises against using negative questions and asking questions that the participants may be unable to answer. This advice has been demonstrated in the above section on sampling, where it is explained that only Blended learning students would answer the questions because distance learning students would not have the experience of the combined form of studying at the HEP. Vaus (1996), advises that demographic questions should be left until the end as the survey should address the main purpose of the research and group together questions in themes. Both of these suggestions have been adopted and favourable feedback has been gained from the pilot study.

The survey was self-completed by participants online. The advantage of this was that a large sample could be used to complete the survey and there was little effort expended in its distribution, (Robson 2011). Web-based survey distribution of questionnaires has grown in popularity for a number of reasons, such as widening the coverage of participants. According to Wright (2005) this process is still evolving. There are of course also disadvantages of this method of distribution. For instance, the survey must not be too complicated as students' levels of functional and intellectual capabilities might differ.

There are a number of advantages in using this approach. These include the ability to access an entire population or sample, (Wellman and Haythornthwaite,1999). For the purposes of this research, the entire student population of the blended delivery was approached and asked to partake in the research. Producing the survey online enabled the targeting of these students and enabled the survey to remain as a document that was constant throughout the process. Those who may have lacked confidence or might have been reluctant to answer a face-to-face survey may have found the online, web based questionnaire more appealing. The online survey also had cost-saving benefits with regards to time spent in its distribution, together with various other costs. Once the survey has been devised it can then be distributed with some ease by the researcher with the click of a button, thus saving time and travel costs for the researcher, (Truell, Barlett and Alexander 2002, and Yun and Trumbo 2000). This also enables the researcher to be moving on with other forms of data collection, in this case, for example, through in-depth interviews, (Llieva, Baron and Healey, 2002). The researcher followed these processes.

There are, however, disadvantages with respect to the web based online survey. These relate, for instance, to sampling and knowing who is exactly answering the questions, (Vaus, 1996). Engaging with the entire population in this study reduced this risk. Andrews et al. (2003) suggest that issues can arise with some online surveys where questions may be altered by the participant. The researcher ensured that this was not possible for the survey and set parameters and access for participants on SurveyMonkey. Another issue might be that the survey participants might not be representative of the population. Some participants, for instance, might consider themselves to be ‘computer savvy’ and therefore are much more likely to complete the survey, than those who are less savvy, Thompson et al. (2003) and Robson (2011).

The researcher encouraged all participants to be involved and posted specific instructions for completion on the ‘News and Frequently Asked Questions’ board within the virtual classroom. An email linked to the survey was also sent to all students. This incorporated instructions outlining how to complete it. Finally, whilst web-based surveys may be very functional, there is the issue of the response rate. There are examples of research studies that reveal that postal questionnaires achieve a higher response rate than online questionnaires, (Bachmann, Elfrink and Vazzana, 1996 Kittleson, 1998 Weible and Wallace1998). To counter this threat of potential low response rates, reminders were sent in the form of an email from the researcher. In addition, tutors were asked to remind students to complete the survey. These actions occurred in accordance with Vaus’s (1996) recommendations: firstly, act after one to two weeks of distribution, secondly, after three weeks and, finally, (as time so permitted), the researcher selected week six for the final intervention.

There were a number of reasons for the distribution of the survey online. They included the following: whilst initially it was thought that printed copies of the survey would be more appropriate, the managing of these would require the involvement by individuals other than the researcher herself, such as some input from support staff or tutors. This might have dissuaded some students from responding as they may not have perceived the survey as part of a PhD study, but merely as an institutional activity. Despite this, the advantage of using the online survey was that there was one contact point for students. Additionally, all students were provided with the same information and instructions for completion prior to the commencement of the questionnaire. Finally, once the data was collected it was able to be exported directly to SPSS, which was designed to reduce any input errors.

The following table provides a summary as to the purpose of the questions within the questionnaire and how these relate to the thesis research questions and conceptual framework variables. The table can be cross-referenced to the questionnaire in Appendix B.

Table 3.2 Mapping survey questions to the research questions, Watson (2017)

Research Question	**Questionnaire Questions**	**Conceptual Framework**
RQ2 – Which factors relating to enrolment do students perceive as important when applying for a course within the 'For Profit' HEP?	3S, 3A, 3C, 3B, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12.	Satisfaction/Experience, Affective Commitment, Calculative commitment, Brand
RQ4 – Which recruitment strategies are perceived as most effective in attracting students to the 'For Profit' HEP?	5, 6, 7.	Recruitment strategies/ Push and Pull factors

3.6 Pilot study results

Dawson (2009) argues that the use of the pilot study is important to ensure that the questions are unambiguous. The pilot study is used to check any vagueness in the design of the data collection methods, (Beebe, 2007). It is a pre-test of the data methods on a smaller scale in order to ensure rigour in the final testing of the actual sample population chosen for the research, (Porta, 2014). Figueiredo and Mayo (2015) explore the format of pilot studies and recommend targeting specific groups, even though the study may not form part of the final research. This ensures consistency and justifies the use of the pilot study within the research. Teijlingen and Hundely, (2001) also propose this approach for the pilot study and advise that the smaller sample should be representative of the target population. They also argue that this group should not form part of the main data collection event as it could lead to contamination of the data. The reason for this is that they already have an insight into the questions and themes. This factor could also disadvantage new participants with no prior insight. This is a view supported by Lancaster et al. (2004). Kistin and Silverstein (2017) explain the benefits of the pilot study, it allows for the checking of the structure of the data collection measurements and questions. Teijlingen and Hundley (2001) also advocate pilot studies and intimate their value as good practice within research methods. Whilst errors still can occur in the data collection process, these authors argue that they are reduced as the pilot study provides an early warning system with respect to potential problems.

The instructions for the pilot study were sent with the interview material and questionnaire. Lancaster, Dodd and Williamson (2004) argue that it is important for pilot studies to have clear aims and objectives. In the case of this study, participants in the pilot study were asked to check the structure and layout of the data collection methods and assess the wording of the questions. With regards to the interview, one full interview was conducted in order to time the session. This took approximately 45 minutes, which was the intended timescale for this element of the data collection. No transcript was taken because the interview would not form part of the raw data for this particular study, the purpose of this session was to check the interview process.

Two sample groups were identified for the initial pilot study: the ‘experts’ and the ‘non-experts’. The experts were comprised of ten academics. They had had exposure to education policy and strategies in the enrolment of students. Therefore, they had some insight into the main themes that the actual participants would be involved in responding to. The ten non-experts were selected at random from the social media site Facebook. I thought that gaining feedback from those who were not privy to developments within the academic sector would be useful as they would be representative of potential students enrolling on a course. In consequence, the survey was issued to these participants.

The results were informative and, as a consequence, both the interview and questionnaire questions were amended where necessary. The tables in Appendix C represent significant changes to the questions. As there were so many suggestions for enhancements and/or amendments to the data collection methods it was deemed appropriate to re-test the pilot study one more time. This helped to promote methodological rigour into the process, (Lancaster, Dodd and Williamson, 2004) and added to the trustworthiness of the data collection methods because the questions were re-checked in order to ensure that their wording was clear, (Vaus,1996). A number of questions were re-worded as the suggestions helped to make the questions clearer. Some questions, however, remained unchanged and justification for this is provided in the tables. The second pilot study was comprised of a sample which was smaller than that of the first pilot study and included four experts and four non-experts. Those selected for the second pilot study were not involved in the first pilot study. Again, participants were selected in the same manner as the first pilot study.

The second pilot study was very useful. The changes within the tables highlight its importance and usefulness as part of the overall research process. All too often pilot studies are conducted without evidence to support the activity and this brings ethical considerations into the process, (Teijlingen and Hundely, 2001). Crosswaite and Curtice (1994) identify the accountability of the researcher throughout the entire research process, thus transparency is essential, (Teijlingen and Hundely, 2001)

Overall, the pilot study was efficacious and provided many opportunities to consider the questions in greater depth. Much of the advice provided was taken up and the questionnaire and interviews were amended. There were some suggestions made, however, upon reflection they were not implemented and the tables explain the reasoning for this. The process of the pilot study was deemed a success, even though it took quite a considerable amount of time to complete. The researcher felt comfortable throughout the development of the data collection methods. Experience prior to using these methods aided the effectiveness of this activity. The survey was adapted to fit in with the requirements of SurveyMonkey. However, the questions remained the same. Using this software was very useful and the researcher was able to implement suggestions from the participants of the pilot study such as ‘randomising answers’.

As part of the pilot study, I conducted an interview with a participant who was not involved in the main study. This was timed and the questions flowed in order. The initial opening of the interview was challenging and the researcher concluded that it consisted of ‘waffle and incoherence’. To address this matter, I created a small power point presentation for the participants to ensure that all of the participants were provided with a consistent introduction to the research. This lasted five minutes, and once this part of the interview was completed the lap top was closed and the interview became more informal and conversational. See Appendix D for full details of the power point.

3.7 Validity and reliability

The notion of ‘truth’ was considered to an extent in section 3.1. Matthews and Ross (2010) confirm that ‘truth’ is very rarely found and as an alternative to absolute truth, ‘meaning’ may be more easily discerned in research. Dean and Whyte (1958) support this position and emphasise the importance of individual perceptions and meaning. In contrast to Matthew and Ross (2010), Dean and Whyte (1958) argue that the question of truth should not be included, particularly in an interview setting. Answers are generally based on the participants’ cognitive and emotional processing of the questions and the way in which they are worded. It is therefore important to ensure that the questions posed are worded specifically to address the requirements of the set research questions.

This section will address the notions of ‘validity’ and ‘reliability’, predominantly in relation to elements of the survey. Validity involves exploring the research findings to ensure that they measure what they are supposed to measure (Drost 2011). Reliability is concerned with the accuracy and consistency of the measurements (Bollen 1989). Essentially, this relates to the duplication and repetition of the results. There are a number of types of potential threats to validity that need to be addressed prior to any research being conducted. Some of these include various forms of validity, such as ‘construct validity’, ‘content validity’, ‘internal validity’, and ‘external validity’. These types of validity are discussed below.

3.7.1 Construct validity

Construct validity examines the data measurement and identifies the extent to which the research process has measured what it is supposed to measure. Boubakri and Cosset (1998), Lai, Heeks and Nicholson (2003), Pattakos (2004) and Wan, Tak and Tiang (2003), attempt to apply construct validity in a number of different ways including the testing of hypotheses, constructing ‘meaning’ from participants’ views, and in using case studies and statistics. All of the studies involve the development of a range of measuring techniques that are ultimately designed to assess the attainment of the main objectives of the research. With this in mind, construct validity has been developed for this thesis based on the mixed methods employed to gather data. This approach is advocated by Campbell and Fiske (1951). The themes identified at the end of Chapter 2 – ‘Developing the Conceptual Framework’, have been used previously in a number of empirical studies. This suggests some legitimacy and credibility when establishing an element of trustworthiness in this research. As Pattako (2004) indicates, collecting expressions and meaning from participants may in itself contribute to validating the research.

In some respects the approach to construct validity is similar to that of ‘criterion validity’. Drost (2011) highlights the significance of using a range of criteria to assess results in research. Having more than one method to gather data is useful as it can corroborate and build comparisons between the raw data collected. For this research criterion, validity was assessed and decisions were made with respect to reducing threats by using a mixture of primary data and secondary sources.

3.7.2 Content validity

Content validity relates to the various concepts and indicators set out in the conceptual framework being used to gather data. Vaus (1996), explains how this type of validity is important when attempting to appraise a concept in its entirety and leaving out indicators that could be a hindrance. Within this research, for example, a significant amount of emphasis was placed on defining the themes at the end of Chapter 2 and then developing the appropriate wording of the questions for both the survey and the interview. This ensured that the content covered all themes of the concept satisfactorily. An example under the heading of 'satisfaction' in the survey could have been to include, 'recommendations by others'. Whilst this would have indicated the use and success of 'recommendations' it would have been a threat as other valuable indicators would not have been considered, such as 'skills development' and 'access to technology'. In other words the concept, 'satisfaction', would not have been fully covered, (Bollen 1989).

3.7.3 Internal validity

The internal threats to validity demonstrate the causal relationships between variables in quantitative studies, whereby the effect of the independent variable can affect the dependant variable. Robson (2002) identifies a number of threats to internal validity. The following table indicates these threats and demonstrates how these were addressed within this research, predominantly in relation to the survey, however, some consideration has also been loosely given to the qualitative elements.

Table 3.3 Internal Validity Threats and Responses, Watson (2017), (adapted from Robson (2002))

Threat	**Solution**	**Risk to Current Research**
History –events differ between participants.	Participants were provided with a number of options to express themselves.	Low risk.
Instrumentation between time periods.	The themes were covered over four time periods. The options remained the same.	Medium risk – this was monitored throughout the data collection process.
Mortality of the sample.	The sample was measured only once.	Low risk.
Ambiguity causal direction.	The themes that were constructed were based on credible past research.	Low risk.
Selection – non-random.	The census approach was opted for during the survey. The interviews were purposeful.	Medium risk. Standard questions at the end of the survey helped to assess actual response rates and demographics of the population. The interview sample was noted as a possible limitation of the research, although those selected would usefully provide in-depth data.
Rivalry and superiority.	The survey did not permit any rivalry to take place as this was based online. The interviews were cross departmental, conversational, and non-threatening. Therefore, participants had no need to demonstrate superiority. The researcher in most cases was also of a lower grade.	Low risk.

3.7.4 External validity and transferability

External validity, commonly known as ‘generalisability’, examines the relevance and usefulness of the results and determines whether there is scope for the research to be repeated in a similar context, but with a different sample, in a different setting, and in a different time period, (Cook and Campbell, 1979). Heukelom (2009) refers to external validity as ‘parallelism’, and similarly places an emphasis on executing similar research within alternative contexts in order for them to correspond in some way. Denscombe (2014) argues that generalisability is based on statistical probability and when conducting qualitative research, researchers put forward an alternative position of ‘transferability’. Researchers arrive at a judgement as to how far the data could be contextualised to other comparable instances. Researchers ask questions such as, “to what extent could the findings be transferred to other contexts,” (Denscombe 2014, pg.299). It is important to consider transferability as this study is developed largely on a qualitative approach and therefore generalisability is difficult to demonstrate.

According to Cook and Campbell (1979), there are a number of threats to external validity, and these were addressed and resolved as part of the research strategy however these were considered predominantly within the context of possible transferability. Some examples of challenges include, ‘selection’, ‘setting’, and ‘history’, (Salkind, 2010, and Scholten, 2017).

Selection refers to the sample chosen for the research and whether the research can be replicated with another group of participants, the census approach took account of this. In setting and executing the data collection strategy, I ensured that the survey was anonymised online. With respect to the interviews, the researcher carefully recorded and transcribed all of these. Prior to any subsequent analysis, the researcher then shared the transcripts with the participants to ensure accuracy. The position of the researcher within the institution had no impact on the research because those interviewed were either from another department or were the researcher’s managers. The question design for both the survey and interviews were also kept fairly general to the overall HE sector rather than the chosen provider. Where questions were more specific, however, they were limited in number and were able to be amended and modified if used again within a different context.

Historical problems can also occur during the data collection process. These largely relate to factors such as the context of the research and any influencers over time that could impact on the findings. These factors can be found in the cases of Boubakri and Cosset (1998) and Roberts et al. (2004) in terms of political interventions and influences. Since this current thesis is specific to the for-profit

HEP, the questions were devised from a range of sources such as education reform, marketisation, segmentation and student recruitment where the past research and concepts are accessible for all institutions within the HE sector. During this research thought was given to the possible implications of this issue, and the only risk identified was possibly related to the differences between the retrospection and reflection of some cohorts and the inexperience of others. This was addressed by adding an option on the survey to recognise the different intake dates into the chosen HEP.

Norris, (1997) argues that there are threats to validity when using qualitative methods. These include: the interpretation and available sources of data, the overuse of theory, reactivity, and participant and researcher bias. To counter these threats the research was approached in a specific way. A conceptual framework was created as a guide to the researcher. This was designed to mitigate any hindrance to the interpretation of the findings. Participants were able to express themselves freely and develop their own meaning of circumstances relating to the organisation.

Potential reactivity and researcher bias were dealt with at the beginning of the interviews that is at the introductory stage of the discussions. Participants were reminded of the importance of providing honest and transparent responses. It was emphasised that the participants would at no point be identified and that their anonymity would be respected at all times. Although more in-depth examination of the make-up of responses occurred once the data was collected, possible interviewer bias was responded to through the use of a range of methods that were designed to ‘triangulate’ the research.

‘Triangulation’ is often used within research to improve the validity or transferability of results. The triangulation process helps in the validation of data through the cross referencing of two or more sources or methods. The notion of triangulation is to have greater confidence in the research findings when the results from more than one source reveal the similar conclusions. There are a number of approaches and techniques that can be adopted in order to enhance the triangulation of the data. Denzin (1978) argues for the importance of selecting a number of data sources. In terms of collecting secondary sources from the provider, this is addressed by using both admissions and marketing databases. Another possible approach is to use more than one researcher in order to encourage rigour and trustworthiness in the data collection and analysis. This latter approach was deemed unsuitable as this study is in fulfilment of my PhD qualification and therefore I confined my work to one individual researcher only, (myself).

Flick, Kardorff and Steinke (2004) confirm that a number of data collection methods can be applied in research. As previously indicated, it was established at the research design stage, that a mixed methods approach would be the most suitable for the research. As Yeasmin and Rahman (2012) explain, triangulation is not solely for the purpose of credibility it is also a useful approach in order to provide an in-depth final understanding of the case. The use of earlier and current theory was also used to provide clarity with respect to the meaning of the raw data collected and the subsequent research findings. There are critics of triangulation and validity. For instance, Calder, Phillips and Tybout (1982) and Fielding and Fielding (1986), argue that whilst demonstrating validity is important, research is more than simply proving validity. The purpose of mixed methods research is to elicit meaning and a key objective of this current research is to develop new theory, if and where appropriate.

3.7.5 Reliability

As already indicated, 'reliability' implies a consistency in the measurement and assessment of data in order for the measurements to be replicated elsewhere, (Flick, Kardorff and Steinke, 2004). The measurement should be able to be repeated and consistent when adapted in alternative research agendas. The pilot studies contributed to the evaluation and relevance of the research indicators. Certain elements of the questionnaire were quantitative in nature, which allowed for some statistical analysis and repetitive indicators to be re-tested, (for example, question 3). The majority of the questions and all of the interview questions were, however, open-ended and qualitative in their approach. Vaus (1996), addresses issues of qualitative data collection and suggests that measuring reliability can be enhanced when establishing the wording of the questions. Vaus's (1996) paper on constructing questionnaires examines question design in detail and provides for scope in transparency, coherence and specificity when wording the survey and interview questions.

Interestingly, some queries were raised with regards to the meaning of some of the questions during the pilot study. Hence, alterations and rewording took place and a second smaller pilot study was conducted in order to re-test the newer questions. Although the pre-testing took some time it was an essential part of building the research data collection methods. This helped to enable the participants to understand and answer the questions. Vaus (1996), advocates the need for a pilot study. As questions were only asked once in this research, the two pilot studies proved to be crucial in ensuring that the questions set were clear and that relevant data could be drawn from them.

Vaus (1996), also highlights the possible advantages of increasing reliability through the establishment of multi-term indicators. To repeat questions can be risky in relation to keeping up the momentum of participants' responses to the ongoing questions, (Mathers et al., 2007). This issue was addressed by providing similar questions and themes across both the interviews and the survey.

3.8 Data analysis

Two types of data were collected in this study. The first was 'quantitative' data, which relied on statistical analysis. The second was 'qualitative' data, which depended on coding and the synthesising of patterns of commonality and difference.

Ordinal scales were used to formulate the semi-quantitative elements of the survey. Bryman and Bell (2011) define 'ordinal variables' as those variables that can be rank ordered. Knapp (1990) argues that ordinal scales are used when the variables cannot be compared. Bryman and Bell (2011) explain how variables can be ranked, though, their distribution is not equal. The options in survey question 3, for instance, enabled participants to make their preferred choices for selecting the HEP. Within ordinal scales there is a further ranking, which is sometimes known within social sciences as 'preference' scales. White (1982) applied preference scales and found that traditional preference scales do have a place in research. In this current research, participants were enabled to rank their preferences.

Bhat (2018) suggests using a 'Likert scale' determines the level of agreement on a chosen topic. The scale was examined as a result of the pilot study. Feedback was gained suggesting that the scale used was reduced to ensure participants were definitive in their choice of answer. As a result of this feedback the choices presented to participants in the survey were reduced. Bhat (2018) identifies the three scale approach and provides polar points and a neutral option. After some deliberation on the value of the 'neutral' option it was decided that participants would be given the opportunity to say whether they chose the HEP based on the factors being: 'most influential', 'less influential' and 'least influential. The neutral option was changed to 'less influential' as this option still delivered insight into the students' choice. Although the option shifted slightly to the positive spectrum, it was decided that even some influence over student choice was more valuable to the research, rather than a participant selecting a neural option. Vagias (2006) refers to this option as 'somewhat influential' and out of the five point Likert scale offered in this research it took the place of the neutral option.

Frequency tables were used to analyse the 'closed' questions within the survey. Berk and Carey (2004) refer to the use of non-parametric tests, whereby measurements are based on rankings rather than numerical values. There are a number of advantages to using non-parametric testing. These include the fact that limited assumptions can be made with regards to the format of the data. This makes the test easy to complete and is made quite convenient when using categorisations rather than numbers, (Whitley and Ball, 2002). The disadvantage of this testing is the lack of power non-parametric tests have in relation to parametric testing that has a fixed set of parameters, (Whitely and Ball, 2002).

It was decided that the statistical data analysis and interventions would be kept to a minimum and only covered in the first part of the survey. It was determined that simple descriptive data analysis of closed questions in the survey would take the form of measurement through percentages in order to identify patterns and emerging themes. The findings were used to provide a descriptive analysis of the frequencies. To support the results, secondary sources from the HEP and literature were triangulated to provide support and, where applicable, to challenge the findings. The closed questions were analysed and tables were developed through the use of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

SurveyMonkey was used as the platform through which to distribute the survey. This platform offered a number of options and SurveyMonkey Gold offered the added advantage of enabling findings to be exported directly to SPSS. The latter system was utilised for this research in order to speed up the data analysis process and to ensure accuracy of the findings and thus eliminate human input errors.

For the qualitative data analysis varying perspectives would be considered before a final approach was decided upon. Grbich (2013) advocates the use of 'grounded' analysis as it develops theory based on observations from the real word. The process of grounded analysis is quite structured and follows a number of logical steps. These include the following: questioning, developing concepts, theoretical sampling creating ideas, new data coding, patterns emerging through the coding, and finally the development of theory, (Flick, Kardorff and Steinke, 2004). An initial assessment of this process tended to indicate that grounded analysis was suitable. It was intended that the research would produce its own unique findings and contribute to originality in an academic context. Flick, Kardorff and Steinke (2004) argue in favour of the use of 'thematic coding' as part of grounded analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006), however, question the notion of thematic coding as being part of grounded analysis and consider thematic analysis as a method in its own right. Boyatzis (1998) considers thematic analysis as a useful way of perceiving and encoding qualitative information.

This is examined by Thomas and Harden (2007). They suggest a three stage approach to thematic analysis: coding text, developing descriptive themes, and then generating analytical themes. Thomas and Harden (2007) explore line by line coding, identifying themes and highlighting similarities and differences between the descriptive themes. They then move on to the generation of analytical themes through synthesis of the data. This approach is quite similar to that posed by Bryman and Bell (2011). They suggest the following process when following a thematic review in qualitative data: read initial transcripts and make brief end notes; re-read and make notes using key words against themes identified from the scripts; review the codes and rewrite similar phrases to a consistent theme; link the themes where possible to existing themes from literature; relate the themes back to existing theory and reconfirm via the transcripts; and finally, synthesise the coding and themes to the literature and research questions.

Braun and Clarke (2006) are critical of simplistic portrayals of thematic analysis. Their criticisms are largely associated with the data analysis. These researchers advise caution regarding the term 'analysis' and suggest that the simple identification of themes does not constitute an analysis. Ignoring theoretical relations and its implications are also problematic in thematic analysis. The researchers use a six stage approach to thematic analysis, including: immersing oneself in the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining the themes and write up of the analysis. They also refer to semantic and latent themes, whereby in the former appropriate words of the participants are identified only, with limited interpretation of meaning. The latter, latent theme occurs when the researcher delves more deeply into the participants' responses to examine ideas and assumptions.

Although thematic analysis can be challenging, it was, nevertheless, selected for this research in order to draw on the experiences of the participants in both the open element of the survey and interviews. The work of Braun and Clarke (2006) was adapted to provide a thorough analysis of the qualitative data. The researcher spent a considerable amount of time immersing herself in the responses, transcribing them, re-reading them and listening to the interviews a number of times. Notes were taken and recorded in the researcher's reflective journal to take account of potential codes and points of interest. Once ready the researcher undertook a coding exercise for both the survey and interviews and identified a number of codes until saturation was reached and no other codes could be found. Various themes were initially identified and then reviewed through the use of a thematic map generated and recorded within the researcher's reflective journal. A more structured plan of the themes was then produced and can be found in appendix L. This enabled the researcher to view the quotes, the codes and then the themes. As a result of this the next step was to define the themes using key recurring words, ideas and assumptions. Once these themes were ascertained, they were then transferred to the thesis and related to the conceptual framework and past theory in order to triangulate the findings. Where appropriate the content was also analysed in relation to the secondary sources used from the HEP's marketing and admissions databases. Finally, the data was referred back to the original research questions in order to ensure that the themes were relevant, fit for purpose, and answered the questions effectively.

3.9 Ethics

Ethical considerations were an important element of the research process. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) define the term as the suitable conduct which the researcher demonstrates to his or her participants. Bryan and Burstow (2018) emphasise the importance of ethics within research. They suggest a deep understanding of research ethics being developed. Consequently, a number of ethical and legal issues are considered within this section. They include: informed consent, participant information, issues of equality and diversity, confidentiality, anonymity and data protection, and bias.

3.9.1 Informed consent, voluntary and participant information

Curtis and Curtis (2011) stress the importance of gaining consent in the research process. This consent, they argue must be informed and voluntary. Allmark (2002) provides guidance on this. He indicates that participants can consent to research if they are of sound mind, have been informed about and given information about the study, and have been recruited on a voluntary basis. Flick (2009) also acknowledges important ethical requirements and draws attention to the necessity of acquiring informed consent in order to protect participants from harm and invasion of privacy. In an earlier study, Flick, Kardorff and Steinke (2004) support this view when they suggest that best practice in ethics involves providing participants with full information regarding the purpose of the research. This gives potential participants time to consider their involvement before they make a decision as to whether or not to proceed with their involvement. Bryman and Bell (2011) examine the lack of informed consent in research, particularly when the study is covert. They, like Flick, Kardorff and Steinke (2004), advocate the need for some information to be provided to participants.

This current research was entirely overt and, consequently, the need to hide information was not applicable. Homan (1991) identifies some issues that may arise from the lack of consent which researchers may overlook or dismiss purposely. An example of this is not to inform interview participants of the time it would take to complete the interview for fear of them to take part in the exercise. This problem was addressed in this current research through the use of a pilot study. A mock interview was conducted and took approximately 45 minutes to complete. This information was provided to potential participants in the introductory email.

The participants involved in both the survey and in-depth interviews were recruited on a voluntary basis. It was important to make the participants fully aware of the research aims and purpose. This information included details about how it would be conducted, their particular involvement, confidentiality, and their right to withdraw from the research. The information was also shared with interview participants both verbally and in written format via email. Emails were sent to participants before the interviews which included invitations to be involved in the research, the main themes of the research, and participants' rights. At this point participants were asked to reply to the email in order to arrange a convenient time and date for the interview; or, if they so wished, to confirm their non-participation. Prior to commencing the actual interviews, participants were again reminded of their rights and the importance of confidentiality. All participants indicated that they were satisfied with this process and agreed to take part in the research.

With respect to the questionnaire, an overview of the research and the need for informed consent was explained prior to the participants undertaking the online survey. This was aimed at gaining their informed consent. At the beginning of the survey participants were required to tick a box to confirm their understanding of their role and rights within the research.

3.9.2 Equality and diversity

Curtis and Curtis (2011) provide some indicators of the potential risks and harm to participants. Whilst this current research was deemed internally as 'low risk' because it did not involve intrusive questioning, there were still some issues to address. Only students and interview participants over the age of 18 were asked to take part in the research. This helped to confirm the fact that those giving consent were capable of doing so, (Allmark, 2002).

Any students with special educational needs were included in the research. The HEP's centre manager and student support staff were informed of the research and were able to offer help to those who required it. The researcher was conscious of the fact that this in itself could pose some issues with respect to influence and bias. Despite this potential problem, participants could not be excluded ethically due to any learning disability they may have had. The manager and student support staff were asked to remain objective and not to influence students' answers. It was made clear that they were only there to help students read and understand the text. If these participants had been excluded then a complete census could not have been undertaken as the entire student population would not have been included. Additionally, the discrimination would be unjustifiable under the Equality Act 2010, (OLG, 2015). An important consideration was made with regards to the additional support to be given to those with special educational needs. This was that the representative might also act as a 'gatekeeper', ensuring that the participant was fully aware of the research procedures and their own involvement. This is a point made by Miller and Bell (2002), who argue that this helps to maintain the level of due diligence with informed consent.

Another consideration was the potential problem of harassment and bullying. Under the Equality Act 2010, harassment and bullying are deemed unlawful and any intimidation or offence must be dealt with immediately, (OGL, nd). Curtis and Curtis (2011) provide some detail on the importance of dealing with discomfort within the interview process. Following the points made by these researchers, questions were focused specifically on answering the research questions only. No intrusive personal information was required. The researcher ensured that if at any point the participant looked or felt uncomfortable, the interview would be stopped and would only reconvene once the participant was ready to do so. This did not occur in any of the interviews.

3.9.3 Confidentiality, anonymity and data protection

Crow and Maclean (2000) encourage the use of pseudonyms in research communities to protect those not wanting to be named. They find that some pseudonyms work very well in practice and blur any reference to actual names. On the other hand there are some communities that cannot hide their identity due to their unique characteristics. In these instances, consent may be necessary and sought as a precautionary measure.

In addition to ethical and moral obligations there are also legal implications to take account of. In particular the Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulation 2018, monitors the usage of data and places great emphasis on protecting content and individuals. DBS (2018) stresses the importance of making data secure and outlines the main principles of the Act. The following table illustrates the fundamental principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulation 2018, and how this research has addressed each of them.

Table 3.4 Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulation 2018, Watson (2018), (adapted from OGL (nd) and DBS (2018))

Data Protection Act 1998 – Main data use principles:	**Current research strategy to address the principles**
Used fairly and lawfully	Consent was obtained from interview participants prior to the primary data collection. Survey participants were given information about the purpose of the research and their role and rights. All participants were able to withdraw at any time.
Used for limited, specifically stated purposes	Both primary and secondary source collection methods were used entirely for the purposes outlined in the introduction and in response to the research questions.
Used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive	All data collected was used solely for the accomplishment of the research questions.
Accurate	The interviews were recorded, transcribed and member checked. The survey was self-completed by participants.
Kept for no longer than is absolutely necessary	The data was collected in fulfilment of the PhD qualification and will remain in the public domain.
Handled according to people’s data protection rights	All participants remained anonymous. The survey did not include any names and interview participants were coded A-H.
Accountability and data kept safe and secure	The survey was securely stored on SurveyMonkey’s database. The interview recordings were kept in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher’s residence. The thesis, which included transcripts, results from the survey, and secondary sources was stored securely on a password-protected P.C.

Grinyer (2002) examines research ethics in depth and considers its implications for academic research. There are a number of basic prerequisites that must be observed throughout the research process. Anonymising participants and institutions contributes to keeping data secure.

As part of the ethics process, the HEP's internal research committee assessed the research purpose, design, and methods, (Flick, 2009). The researcher had to reassure the HEP's committee that at no point during the research would the HEP's real name be exposed. The reason for this was that because of the HEP being a competitive profit making organisation, the sharing of commercial strategies was considered inappropriate. This decision was questioned by one manager in the provider who thought that the interviews could still direct readers of the research to individuals holding key roles and, therefore, a search on the internet could possibly reveal an actual person's name. Even though this view of anonymity was not shared by the manager, the researcher did respect the concern and in consequence parameters were set for the research, and the HEP's name was not revealed at any point. The interviews were coded A-H in order to hide the identity of the participants. Any reference to the HEP was referred to as the 'For-Profit HEP' or 'HEP' as a suitable pseudonym, or simply 'the University'.

3.9.4 Bias

There was a threat that 'bias' may hinder the research. Yin (2014) identifies such issues when a case study research strategy is adopted. He argues that researchers need to be mindful of bias and the danger of having preconceived ideas about the case organisation. This argument is also supported by Pannucci and Wilkins (2010). As a member of the HEP's academic staff, this researcher had some personal involvement in the development of the blended-learning delivery model. Being aware of bias and addressing it at this stage was, therefore, essential. Robson (2011) considers the element of bias in all types of research and asserts that the more 'fluid' the research the more likely such a problem is to occur. Padgett (1998) offers some safeguards to counter any threats from biased interventions. These include employing 'triangulation' of the methods. This strategy was implemented as a safeguard in order to reduce possible bias during the collection of both the quantitative and qualitative data.

Another possible resolution of the bias problem is through providing debriefing and support. Padgett (1998) refers to this as ‘therapy’ because it basically enables the researcher to share in the research process, feelings, and stress. This approach was adopted by the researcher by acquiring another academic to act as a ‘critical friend’, as Rajendran, (2001) suggests. In this instance thoughts relating to the research were discussed and honest feedback was provided to help the researcher in terms of the most appropriate approach to the research process and the participants. Any inclination towards bias was noted and the researcher addressed this immediately.

Member-checking is a further potential remedy for bias. This involves the checking of transcripts by the participant to verify the content. If there are any anomalies, Padgett (1998) indicates, these can be generally rectified through mutual agreement. This approach was also adopted by the researcher. Once the interviews were transcribed they were sent to the participants for sign-off.

Unbiased data searches were useful when searching for resources for the literature review and when sourcing secondary resources. Using key words relating to the topic and themes contributed towards the revelation of a range of perspectives. As Yin (2014) argues, a researcher must use the literature in an honest manner and never plagiarise or misrepresent content. This approach was utilised when scoping the literature throughout the thesis. Due care and attention was taken in order to ensure that the literature was acknowledged, and paraphrasing was attempted in order to represent the studies and to avoid any misconceptions. Bryman and Bell (2011) draw attention to the problem of potential copyright infringements. Again, this was adhered to using Harvard referencing standards in order to ensure that all text and diagrams were accredited appropriately.

Finally, the researcher took up the line advised by Bryman (2016), who argues that ethical considerations within research are paramount otherwise participants and the research could become ‘unsafe’.

3.10 Reflective vignette

This chapter sets out to provide a comprehensive assessment of the philosophical and methodological approaches used within this research. I found the initial prospect of writing such a chapter quite daunting. To ensure a critical assessment of each stage basic cognitive, (Green and Riddell, 2009), and non-cognitive behavioural and coping techniques, (Gutman, 2013), were adopted; as Vivyan (2009) states, the event is not the issue it is the interpretation of the event that causes unease.

I have attempted the completion of this chapter in as rational and effective manner as possible. Ciarrochi and Bailey (2008) discuss the notions of 'fusion' and 'diffusion'. Elements of 'negativity' were eradicated from my thought processes. Until a reasonable degree of 'rationality' in my thought process could be demonstrated I delayed writing this chapter and took some time to diffuse the situation. Diffusion means being able to review a situation in a more rational and focused manner. As an experienced dissertation supervisor, I decided to follow the advice I give to my own students and adopted the structure associated with a postgraduate methodology. I therefore, divided the sections of the chapter into a number of headings and allocated the word content accordingly. Once all this was in place, I then viewed each section in isolation. When a section was satisfactorily completed and an analysis had taken place, I then could relate it to the next stage of the chapter.

Whilst addressing the challenges of this chapter, I also made a conscious decision to monitor my own development as a researcher. I believed that this would help to improve my skills as the study progressed. Gibbs (1988) proposes a structured, reflective model in order to enable practitioners to evaluate situations and events. The following reflection provides some sense of the methodology chapter and how I improved my skills whilst writing this section. I based the content on Gibb's model of description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusions and action plan.

3.10.1 Gibbs (1988) reflective model – The researcher's personal view

Description

I set out to complete the chapter using approximately 20,000 words. Whilst writing the content, I reflected on the lessons learned from previous empirical studies. The aim of the chapter was to develop an appropriate methodology in order to gather data which was relevant to the achievement of the research objectives.

Feelings

The irrational thoughts I had at the beginning this chapter induced considerable unnecessary stress and upset. According to Balevre (2001) these symptoms are a consequence of emotions leading to potential deleterious behaviours. I imagined the challenge of the chapter as a whole and was nervous with respect to commencing the writing of it.

Evaluation

Once the initial apprehension was overcome, I reviewed the structure of the chapter and assessed the scale of the exercise. All sections were addressed in turn, some being more difficult than others. As the chapter progressed my knowledge and understanding of research methods improved. Despite some early mistakes, these were addressed and rewritten. At one point, for instance, when assessing the survey, I thought that a computer-aided interview would be appropriate. It was not until further research that I realised this was not suitable and changed the section to a web based survey.

In addition to the Gibbs's model, Atkins and Murphy (1994) indicate the usefulness of a three stage reflection. The stages are: 'reflection before action', 'reflection during action' and 'reflection after action'. I adopted this model in order to assess aspects of the chapter whilst work was in progress. Being able to reflect on what needed to be accomplished before writing the sections, enabled more effective planning and organisation. This was valuable for research and writing purposes. Reflection during action was helpful when developing my knowledge of research methods. It allowed me to analyse and evaluate my strengths and weaknesses. For example, I felt more confident when writing about sampling, the pilot study, and methods; though not so self-assured in other areas. As part of the development process, I asked for advice on a number of occasions from my supervisors and my critical friend. I was pleased with how these conversations aided my development of research methods. Reflection after action was quite straightforward, not only in terms of re-reading the content to ensure that the concepts had been interpreted correctly and adequately, but this also ensured that the methods were justified and synthesised.

The chapter enabled some reflection and integration of 'Gestalt psychology'. This theory focuses on patterns and new ideas contributing to the development of the 'whole' or completion of the chapter, (Woldt, 2009). As each section was completed the development of the overall chapter was gradually established. This 'holistic' process enabled me to complete an in-depth critique of appropriate methods used in this research.

Analysis

I now realise that this chapter could have been approached in a more pragmatic manner. Using elements of cognitive behaviour theory to help determine the best approach to this chapter might have made more sense, rather than to allow panic and irrational thinking to temporarily take control. The use of reflective models in greater depth after each section may have also provided a useful means of assessing my progress. As work by Peels (2010) and Storkerson (2009) indicates, understanding and confidence in my strengths and experiential knowledge of research methods, would have helped in the completion of this chapter. Drawing on prior experience and knowledge of research methods may have helped ameliorate any stress issues relating to the challenge of dealing with an often complex methods chapter.

Conclusion

In conclusion, completion of this chapter has enabled me to gain a broader understanding of research methods. It has also equipped me with skills required to execute the data collection in a more efficient and effective manner.

I think that as a researcher I have enhanced the following skills through completion of this section of the thesis.

1. Cognitive skills. In particular turning irrational thinking into rational actions. Green and Riddell (2009) suggest that the development of cognitive skills, such as literacy, numeracy and decision-making enables complex tasks to be completed. This helped when conducting the interviews. It has also helped to control my nervousness and helped me to facilitate a more positive and comfortable environment for the participants.
2. Communication skills. Murphy and Hildebrandt (1984) identify seven “C’s” that ensure effective communication. These are: completeness, conciseness, consideration, concreteness, clearness, courteousness, and correctness. I feel that these skills have improved through my attempted rigorous assessment and writing of research methods theory, together with verbal communication with other academics. My communication skills as a researcher have also improved as the pilot study has forced me to interact with 14 ‘experts’ and 14 ‘non-experts’. I have become more aware of non-verbal communication cues; possible complications when dealing with uncommunicative or over-communicative participants; and also the discernment of terms of references within a conversation.
3. Planning skills. This chapter has highlighted the importance of planning in advance. As Power (2017) states: good planning leads to effective analysis, interpretation and assessment of data. All these skills will be invaluable as I progress through the research. Using the findings of Atkins and Murphy (1994) has also helped with planning the data collection. ‘Reflection in action’ is essential in order to make any modifications if any anomalies are identified once the data collection is live. For example, it might be that the participant information sheet needs further detail. Unless reflection occurs then such improvements may not be made.
4. Empathetic skills. Vyskocilova, Prasko and Slepecky (2011) suggest that showing empathy is a skill that most cognitive behavioural therapists should demonstrate. Whilst I do not make a claim to possess the complete skills of this specialism, I do think that this skill has been exercised, to some degree, during the course of the data collection process and through the appraisal

of ethical issues. Padgett (1988) emphasises the need to show empathy to all participants. This has been attempted through respect, care, and careful perception of the responses.

Action Plan

This section focuses on actions needed to make improvements to current practice, as advocated by Gibbs (1988). Though this chapter will not be repeated, the action plan, together with any future enhancements, based on knowledge and experience gained from this section of the study, will be relevant to the remainder of the research. I will endeavour, therefore, to adhere to the following:

1. Reduce stress levels and diffuse situations immediately, which will hopefully lead to greater efficiency when collecting and analysing data.
2. Use the findings of Schon (1983) and Atkins and Muprhy (1994), for reflection at each stage of the remaining research. This will enable amendments to be made to the research when required.
3. Make full use of my ‘critical friend’ in order to lessen the danger of bias.
4. Use best practice, (as outlined in this chapter), when conducting the interviews.
5. Ensure transparency in the research and provide detailed instructions to participants when completing the interviews and survey.
6. Know my limitations when dealing with statistical analysis and, when necessary, take steps to reduce the impact of such limitations through training education, and relevant advice.

In conclusion, I have found that the writing of this chapter has been a challenge. However, I think that I have set out a reasonably comprehensive account of my intentions with respect to conducting this research. I have read a number of articles and blogs from PhD students regarding the feelings of students during the writing process. I can relate to many of these reflections and I published my own blog for IPDA (The International Professional Development Association). I found an article by Weitershausen (2014) particularly pertinent. A sub-section of this article looks at why PhD students may actually become ‘sad’. One answer is that it is due to ‘self-absorbed’ colleagues who don’t help. This has been part of my experience with respect to several colleagues, who have tended to be overprescriptive in respect of their advice. I have found this somewhat discouraging. However, in seeking consolation from my more ‘balanced’ and ‘neutral’ colleagues together with various blogs, I have been able to deal with unhelpful comments. I have become mindful, also, of tips from a blog by Hope (2012), one of which is that it is the researcher who has to eventually defend the thesis, not any self-absorbed colleagues. Hope indicates that whilst ‘perfection’ may be the ultimate goal, in reality the thesis needs to be finished. In line with this observation, my Vice-Chancellor has given me similar advice regarding my thesis stating, “You need to stop writing at some point and just submit it.” Finally, Delorean (2015), in his blog, is very encouraging when he points out all the advantages of being awarded a PhD, such as gaining peer respect and enhancing career prospects. I have found the above comments and advice to be highly motivating.

Chapter 4 - Data Analysis

4.0 Introduction

This chapter will present the research findings from two data sets, and the findings are compared with data and reports from the HE provider and the relevant research literature. In the chapter, there is the integration of the responses from the survey and the interviews. These findings are situated alongside wider research findings from the literature review, in order to provide an in-depth and holistic assessment of the case study institution.

The chapter is divided into a number of sections. The sections will be initially divided in relation to the themes identified through the establishment of the conceptual framework. They include: ‘Satisfaction’, ‘Calculative Commitment’, ‘Affective Commitment’ and ‘Brand’. The statements that accompany each table are based on those asked to the students following the completion of two pilot studies. After this content, there are a further three sections: ‘methods of marketing communications’; the ‘blended pedagogy’; and ‘anticipated student outcomes’. A final discussion section will summarise the results and readdress the themes from the conceptual framework. The chapter is presented largely in narrative format and the content includes cross-references to the appendix in order to provide enhanced detail and evidence from the raw data collected.

4.1 Satisfaction

The following four sections will present the primary findings in relation to the theme from the conceptual framework on page 248. Students were given the opportunity to select from the options for each question and statement. They could decide whether the statements were ‘most influential’ to them when making their selection of the university, ‘less influential’, (but still had some influence), and then finally, the statement was ‘least influential’. These categories were confirmed suitable as a result of the pilot studies. This provided students with some options to choose from. This section presents the results from the ‘Satisfaction’ theme. The content covers each statement, some aspects are more revealing than others in terms of frequencies and percentages, however, it is useful to include all in order to be able to assess the results holistically and thus gain a clearer of picture of patterns and themes emerging from the survey, interviews, and secondary sources.

4.1.1 Satisfaction summary

Table 4.1 Course content – academic content and learning materials

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	239	46.7	71.3	71.3
	Less influential	81	15.8	24.2	95.5
	Least influential	15	2.9	4.5	100.0
	Total	335	65.4	100.0	
Missing	System	177	34.6		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.1 reveals that the course content and learning materials influence students' choice when selecting their university. Students are provided with some exposure to these variables, for instance, when navigating the university website, reading the prospectus and when joining subject specific webinars. 71.3% think that this is a most influential factor and 24.2% think it is important, (although not the main reason for selecting the university). Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992) support this view and place the emphasis on course content as an influencing factor when students are choosing a higher education institution. The interview participants also envisage that the online content, supported by the taught element, defines the teaching for the Blended learning delivery. Participant D refers to the '10 Golden Questions' on the University's website. This is a survey that is a 'tool', used by the University designed to understand its students and segments better. One of the questions refers to 'excitement' of the digital content (For-Profit HEP, 2016). By rating this, the provider can then use this as a possible gauge for student motivation.

Table 4.2 Access to technology – online learning facilities and module pages

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	192	37.5	65.3	65.3
	Less influential	71	13.9	24.1	89.5
	Least influential	31	6.1	10.5	100.0
	Total	294	57.4	100.0	
Missing	System	218	42.6		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.2 provides more specific results regarding access to technology and the online learning facilities. Again, students think that the online content is a good reason to select the provider. Students are informed of the technology available through various means, for example, the university website and admissions advisors. 65.3% opted for it being the most influential factor with 24.1% less so, (but still viewing this as important). Participant A explains: “Students want to fit in their learning with lifestyle and how we can integrate the learning experience with technology. That is where the product has emerged from and is still emerging.” It is assumed, therefore, that comparisons can be made regarding the importance of materials and access to technology both for the students and interview participants. Davis (1986), (as cited in Davis et al. 1989), discusses the ‘Technology Acceptance Model’ and argues that the ‘users’, (in this instance, students), will consider the information available and the ease of using the online platform.

Table 4.3 Blended approach to learning – the combination of on campus seminars, online learning materials and flexibility of learning

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	330	64.5	78.9	78.9
	Less influential	76	14.8	18.2	97.1
	Least influential	12	2.3	2.9	100.0
	Total	418	81.6	100.0	
Missing	System	94	18.4		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.3 shows that the statement relating to Blended learning received a high overall response rate at 81.6%. 78.9% of students decided that the flexible approach to online and offline learning is a most influential factor and 18.2% think that it is important, (although less influential), when selecting the University. The Blended learning mode is also shared positively by the interview participants. Participants A through to H, all explain the Blended approach to be two days on-campus and the availability of online teaching and lectures. Participant B refers to: "Widening participation and value-added". Farr (2003) also discusses the importance of widening participation and looks at under-represented groups. Participants E, G and H support this approach to teaching as students can fit in their learning with childcare and work. Esposito's (2015) research identifies that when 1600 adults were questioned in relation to their interest in Blended learning, 50% were interested in applying for a Blended course as opposed to only 43% who thought that they might be interested in a purely online based course. Participant B provides an explanation for the need for such an approach to learning: "less confident people need the Blended learning structure. It is asynchronous and structured". Participant G also explains the value of the mix of both online and offline contact. Anderson (2006) argues that institutions need to reach out to the students more. The Blended delivery therefore provides students with both the online and offline support and this is considered by the provider as having the potential to support 'needy students'.

Table 4.4 Skills development – practical skills development of the course concepts and personal skills development

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	190	37.1	67.4	67.4
	Less influential	82	16.0	29.1	96.5
	Least influential	10	2.0	3.5	100.0
	Total	282	55.1	100.0	
Missing	System	230	44.9		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.4 supports the literature with regards to developing practical skills for work. Participant A discusses the notion of 'graduate attributes' and embedding them into programmes. This participant explains that: "Students will be looking to

put skills into practice." The structure of the programmes and the development of both transferable and professional skills development appear to be important to students. Both most and less influential choices make up 96.5% of those who selected this statement. Many past studies identify students' desire to develop skills, predominantly to prepare for the work environment. Varman, Biswatosh and Per-Skalen (2011), for instance, argue that students focus their studies on gaining employment and they make reference (indirectly) to neoliberal Governmental subjectivity, whereby the curriculum and extra-curricular activities refine students' employability skills.

Table 4.5 Service received and interactions with the University – including admissions and student support

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	148	28.9	65.8	65.8
	Less influential	65	12.7	28.9	94.7
	Least influential	12	2.3	5.3	100.0
	Total	225	43.9	100.0	
Missing	System	287	56.1		
Total		512	100.0		

A number of past studies identify services and interactions with universities and the impact that positive experiences have on student choice. Nicholls (1995) and Mazzarol (1998) argue that education is a service. However, Oliveros et al. (2010) argue that the 'service' aspects of a university may be 'forgotten' due to break-downs in communications between departments. As this case study university is new and therefore relatively small, any disjoint between departments seems to be less serious, as Table 4.5 indicates: 65.8% of students think these interactions are most influential and 28.9% of students consider that this has had some influence on their choice. The views of the students possibly appear to somewhat mirror those of the interview participants. Participant G explains how staff receive training using the online materials to gain a better understanding of the type of pedagogy and learning involved: "They have a much better idea of what is expected of a Blended student." Interestingly Participant F refers to the recruitment process as "a nurture track," whereby potential applicants will receive "soft" interactions, including examples of success stories and relevant information prior to being encouraged to enrol.

The following Tables 4.6 to 4.9 outline the extent of influence exerted by various ‘stakeholders’ on the students’ desire to apply to the HEP.

Table 4.6 Recommendation by other – Parent

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	23	4.5	10.1	10.1
	Less influential	57	11.1	25.0	35.1
	Least influential	148	28.9	64.9	100.0
	Total	228	44.5	100.0	
Missing	System	284	55.5		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.7 Recommendation by other – Peer

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	61	11.9	31.0	31.0
	Less influential	58	11.3	29.4	60.4
	Least influential	78	15.2	39.6	100.0
	Total	197	38.5	100.0	
Missing	System	315	61.5		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.8 Recommendation by other – Employer

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	31	6.1	15.2	15.2
	Less influential	42	8.2	20.6	35.8
	Least influential	131	25.6	64.2	100.0
	Total	204	39.8	100.0	
Missing	System	308	60.2		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.9 Recommendation by other – School or College

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	49	9.6	23.8	23.8
	Less influential	43	8.4	20.9	44.7
	Least influential	114	22.3	55.3	100.0
	Total	206	40.2	100.0	
Missing	System	306	59.8		
Total		512	100.0		

Tables 4.6 to 4.9 reveal that recommendations by others are influencers, to varying degrees with respect to selecting the university. Such recommendations are based on the ‘feelings’ and the ‘beliefs’ of others about the university. Stakeholder recommendations and the involvement of others in the decision-making process is also supported by the research of Chapman (1986) and Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014), who specifically identify input from parents as important influencing factors on university choice. The results show that students were less influenced by parents (35.1%), employers (35.8%) and schools (44.7%) and more influenced by peers (60.4%). Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014) suggest that students ‘bragging’ about the institution influence other students’ decisions. This is a clear indication of the importance of peer group influence on potential student applicants. Gajic (2010) also finds that 72% of students are influenced to attend university based on a recommendation by a friend. Whilst peers may have scored higher than the other stakeholders, the HEP still needs to consider the role of parents, employers, and schools/colleges and keep these parties engaged, well-informed, and on board when communicating the advantages of studying at the university.

The inclusion of stakeholders’ input when developing pedagogy was considered in the interviews. Five of the eight participants identified ‘student voice’ as important. Consequently, more effort in using students as advocates is being considered. Participants D and F recognise the benefit of the student voice and ‘student stories’ to attract applicants to the university. Parents were not identified as being of major significance by the university. Whilst employers were considered important by Participants A, B, D and G when developing programmes, Participants B and H suggested that work needs to be done to establish outreach programmes with employers, schools and colleges: “corporate internships and apprenticeship schemes…. We get into schools and colleges and talk about the university.” The development of outreach programmes with employers relates to the previous research of Conway, MacKay and Yorke (1994). They suggest that the student is a ‘product’ for employment and that this is the reality when seeking support and recommendations by employers. This benefits both parties. Firstly, the university’s student numbers will increase, which will lead to higher profitability, and secondly, through working closely with employers, programmes may be modified and developed to suit employability skills for a specific sector.

Table 4.10 Past experience of the University

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	39	7.6	18.1	18.1
	Less influential	48	9.4	22.3	40.5
	Least influential	128	25.0	59.5	100.0
	Total	215	42.0	100.0	
Missing	System	297	58.0		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.10 considers past experience at the university as an indicator for continuance to study at the university. This tends to be a least influential factor at 59.5%. This is likely to be due to the university’s rebranding. Those who did select most influential 18.1% and less influential at 22.3% may have been directed in some way from a ‘sister’ college owned by the HEP’s parent company.

Table 4.11 Past experience of the tutor’s expertise in the subject area

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	51	10.0	23.7	23.7
	Less influential	48	9.4	22.3	46.0
	Least influential	116	22.7	54.0	100.0
	Total	215	42.0	100.0	
Missing	System	297	58.0		
Total		512	100.0		

Similarly in Table 4.11 students are least likely to select the university due to the past experience of the tutor, at 54%. Although Gajic (2012) suggests that tutor experience is important, I argue that since the university is new in the marketplace, some sort of recommendation from the sister college is likely to have occurred as the tutor workforce is new and still 46% of students suggested that the tutor influenced their decision.

Table 4.12 Demanding higher wages upon completion

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	79	15.4	39.5	39.5
	Less influential	76	14.8	38.0	77.5
	Least influential	45	8.8	22.5	100.0
	Total	200	39.1	100.0	
Missing	System	312	60.9		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.13 Employment opportunities as a result of the qualification

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	144	28.1	72.7	72.7
	Less influential	45	8.8	22.7	95.5
	Least influential	9	1.8	4.5	100.0
	Total	198	38.7	100.0	
Missing	System	314	61.3		
Total		512	100.0		

Tables 4.12 and 4.13 are largely tailored towards future employment, wages and progression. Both employment opportunities and demanding higher wages are important contributory factors when selecting the university. Participant A shares his thoughts and places an emphasis on students being “work-ready individuals” upon completion of their course. In total 77.5% of students who answered the question in Table 4.12 think that this statement is most or to some extent influential on their decision to enrol. 95.5% of students think that the qualification received from the University will lead to employment opportunities. This far outweighs the results from Gajic (2012) who finds that only 13% of students are influenced by the possibility of employment opportunities. Nicholls (1995),

Mazzarol (1998), and Grosjean (2004), however, stress the importance of courses being designed with the aim being an entry point into employment.

4.1.2 Satisfaction and end of survey questions

Appendix E includes some of the results from the statements in relation to the data set of the study with respect to geographic and demographical indicators. The following section summarises the key points of interest and reveals the themes that have emerged from the data. A lot of the information has been broken down into small subsections such as, 'course name' and 'ethnic group'; and consequently, whilst the results in percentages may appear significant in relation to the frequencies, the numbers are nonetheless low.

Table E1 presents the 'ethnic split' in relation to 'course content'. The category of 'Other Black Background' reveals that 90.9% of students think that the course content mostly influences their decision to select the university. 'Black or Black British Africans' are a significant set of students also responding positively to this statement, (80 students, or 75.5% of the respondents). Evans (2012) suggests that sharing information on course content at the recruitment stage is important.

Table E2 outlines the results in age groups with respect to 'access to technology'. Interestingly, 18.9% of the 18-30 age group do not think that this statement influences their decision making process. This could be due to the segment being comprised of 'Disengaged Learners'. According to Eposito (2015), this segment is made up of young and mature learners who predominantly want face to face interaction and have regular on campus one to one time with the tutors, therefore access to technology may not be a priority to some. It is noted overall, that within the age 18-30 group 62.2% are most influenced by access to technology. Those who selected this option may be from different segments.

Table E3 refers to the 'Blended approach' to learning. The average most influential percentage is 78.9%. Out of those students from Birmingham who answered this question 100% think that the Blended pedagogy is most influential when selecting the University. This could be due to their additional commitments, such as work, or location of the campus. The Blended approach allows for flexibility in their work/study time. The Birmingham campus is positioned conveniently outside of Birmingham Grand Central station on New Street. In line with these findings, Evans (2012) argues that students tend to prefer flexible classroom hours and to be within a convenient geographic radius of home.

Table E4 considers ‘recommendations by peers’. The results reveal some interesting findings. Overall, 39.6% of students think that a recommendation by a friend is ‘least influential’ when selecting the University, however, in Ealing and Birmingham these figures are significantly higher, (Ealing 60.9% and Birmingham 80%). Although the numbers are relatively small, Ealing in particular could benefit from further research in order to understand the lack of peer influence. It could be that students are unaware of the ‘refer a friend scheme’ or that until alumni are forthcoming, peer recommendations are unlikely to take place. Participant F makes reference to utilising the alumni once they have been established and this will take time. Similarly, in Table E5 the 18-30 age group produce results of 58.5% of students who are ‘less influenced’ by peers as opposed to the average of 39.6%. This could be due to limited experience of and exposure to such a new university. In contrast, Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014) argue that those seeking satisfaction from a course are more likely to be influenced by word of mouth and recommendations from others.

Table E6 refers to the notion of being ‘able to demand higher wages’ on completion of the course. At 60% the October 2016 cohort appear to be more inclined to see this statement as ‘most influential’ when selecting the university, in comparison to the 39.5% average. This could be due to the specific programmes launched in this period, which were largely Business, Healthcare Management and the Qualifying Law Degree.

4.2 Calculative commitment

The results in this section relate to ‘Calculative Commitment’, another of the themes that students consider when searching for a higher education institution or provider.

4.2.1 Calculative commitment summary

The options for students are once again divided into three: ‘most influential factor’, ‘less influential factor’ and ‘least influential factor’. In general, the four statements regarding the 'cost' of the course tend to be the main driver for students selecting the For-profit HEP as their place of study.

Table 4.14 Cost of the course

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	311	60.7	72.2	72.2
	Less influential	85	16.6	19.7	91.9
	Least influential	35	6.8	8.1	100.0
	Total	431	84.2	100.0	
Missing	System	81	15.8		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.14 shows that out of those students answering this question, 72.2% think that this statement is 'most influential' and 19.7% regard this as 'less influential', (cumulatively 91.9%). The interview participants have an opinion on costs. Participants A, B, and D stress the financial changes in higher education that have made the student: "more cost conscious". The interviewees think that this has been due to rising students fees. Participant E asserts that the university is offering: "lower fees". The significance of course cost and student fees generally have also been discussed at some length by researchers such as Molesworth, Scullion and Nixon (2011) and Onderwijsraad (2001), when they consider changes in the higher education market.

Table 4.15 Believe the course is value for money

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	185	36.1	50.0	50.0
	Less influential	93	18.2	25.1	75.1
	Least influential	92	18.0	24.9	100.0
	Total	370	72.3	100.0	
Missing	System	142	27.7		
Total		512	100.0		

Another factor that is noted by the survey participants is their belief in degree courses providing 'value for money', (refer to Table 4.15). Whilst only 50% of those who answered this question identify this factor as a reason to select the institution as ‘most influential’, the overall ‘influential’ data is significant and is quantified at 75.1%. Participant A makes some assertions in relation to fees and that student debt is an issue in terms of the value added and employment journey. He states: “The return on investment and the benefits of going to university versus the debts are being questioned.” In other words, Participant A assumes that students want value and aim to see that their course and subsequent debt has been worthwhile. Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014) also argues to some extent that value for money and examining costs is a factor when students are considering higher education institutions.

Table 4.16 Access to student loans and bursaries

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	195	38.1	48.1	48.1
	Less influential	128	25.0	31.6	79.8
	Least influential	82	16.0	20.2	100.0
	Total	405	79.1	100.0	
Missing	System	107	20.9		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.17 Performed a favourable cost-benefit analysis prior to enrolment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	140	27.3	37.0	37.0
	Less influential	157	30.7	41.5	78.6
	Least influential	81	15.8	21.4	100.0
	Total	378	73.8	100.0	
Missing	System	134	26.2		
Total		512	100.0		

The remaining two statements, ‘Access to student loans and bursaries’ and ‘Performed a cost-benefit analysis prior to enrolment’, also reveal positive influencers on the student decision making process. When adding the ‘most’ and ‘less’ influential options, the valid percentages produce results of 79.8% for the first statement (Table 4.16) and 78.6% for the latter statement (Table 4.17). It is interesting to note that Table 4.17 indicates a good level of student interest in performing a cost-benefit analysis. The interview participants have some views on fee structures. Participants A, B and C stress the significance of “changes in fees” and “access to loans”. Participant H discusses importance of the link between higher students’ fees and expectations of the final outcomes of their courses, this being related to performing of a cost-benefit analysis: “As fees have gone up people have been more aware of what they are getting themselves into and that they are investing in education”. Gajic (2012) also reflects on ‘costs’ and argues that students assess fees in terms of both the psychological and the economic impact. Gajic (2012) argues that students consider if the course and university are worth the investment and, secondly, whether or not the course is affordable.

4.2.2 Calculative cost and end of survey questions

The following section explores the four statements further and examines the presence of course related, geographical and demographic factors that may have an impact on students when they are selecting their course and thinking about costs.

Appendix F, Tables 1-8 provide the data for, ‘Cost of the Course’. To analyse these tables, both the percentage of those who answered and the frequencies have been taken into account. Some responses receive a 100% response, though the size of the sample was small. It has been useful and purposeful, therefore, to consider frequencies and then determine the statements’ relevance. A total of 396 students out of a possible 431 selected ‘most’ and ‘less’ influential for this category over the four measured periodic intakes. Peak intakes occurred in February 2017 and October 2017 and this is replicated in the number of responses in Table F1. When considering ‘course selection’ there did not appear to be any significant deviations away from the first two choices regarding the cost of the course. Those enrolling on the courses think that cost is important, (refer to Table F2). Similarly, ‘location’ does not have an effect on student selection. Tower Hill has the most responses due to the sheer size of the campus and intake of students. Percentage-wise, however, it was in line with the other four campuses, (refer to Table F3). Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006) also place an emphasis on the importance of student fees. These researchers examine the cost of courses in relation to outputs with regards to quality of teaching and the quality of the university overall.

With respect to ‘gender differences’ in Table F4, the cost of the course appears important to both genders, though at 72.1% females place this statement as the most important factor, which is slightly more than that of males at 67.7%. Although more males regard the cost of the course as ‘slightly less important’, they still consider it a factor in their choice of institution. In terms of ‘age groups’, those aged 51 years and over (and those who prefer not to give their age), deem the cost of the course as highly important, (refer to Table F5). This could be due to them having other living expenses, such as paying rent. 92.9% of those students who pay rent agree that cost of the course is ‘most’ and ‘less’ influential, (Table F6). Students who are single, married and have chosen not to share this information, again place more emphasis on these first two influencers, (refer to Table F7). It appears, therefore, that students of a certain age, with additional responsibilities are most affected by the cost of a degree.

Finally, ‘ethnic background’ is considered and ‘Black or Black British – African’ tend to be most affected by costs. This ethnic group forms quite a large proportion of the student demographic within the institution and so it is more useful to consider frequencies when examining ethnic distribution, (refer to Table F8). In general, it can be observed that most ethnic groups see ‘cost’ as highly important. Vossemsteyn (2002) argues that students think rationally about their choice of institution and gather facts, including costs and fees, before making a decision. This view appears to be in line with these current research results. Students are conscious about costs and other economic factors when choosing to study. Interestingly, the ‘White’ category reveals that 42.1% of students consider cost as ‘less’ important and 15.8% as ‘least’ important. This might be due to the presence of a greater awareness of student loans. Molesworth, Scullion and Nixon (2011) and Onderwijsraad (2001) both assess costs and student fees versus the outcome, both in relation to future employability and contribution to society. The findings of these researchers tend to support earlier findings that suggest that potential applicants assess costs in direct relation to the perceived ‘future employment’ values of specific courses.

Appendix F then moves on to consider ‘access to student loans and bursaries’ as factors within a potential applicant’s decision making process. Table F9 refers to ‘place of study’ and interestingly students residing in Birmingham and Manchester indicate that they are most likely to seek access to loans and bursaries, (Birmingham 71.4% and Manchester 73.3%). This is higher than the 48.1% average across all five centres. This could be due to differences in personal income and other financial considerations. According to Ehrenberg and Spikernell (2014), those living in the Midlands and North of England earn an average income that is £12,329 less than those residing in or around the London area. This is revealed in the survey findings as students applying for the London campuses seem to view access to loans and bursaries as 'least influential' (Ealing [17.6%], Tower Hill [20.6%], Holborn [35.5%]). This is in contrast to Birmingham (7.1%) and Manchester (6.7%). In terms of age group, Table F10 shows that those in the 51 years and above age category find access to student loans and bursaries 'most influential' when selecting the university, at 68.6%; in comparison to the sample average of 48.1% There are cost advantages for this age group in taking these loans. Ross (2014) argues that two thirds of students are unlikely to prepay their student loans when debts are written off after 30 years.

In terms of 'performing a favourable cost-benefit analysis' ahead of studying, 68.4% of those students who commenced their studies in June 2017 undertook this exercise as opposed to the sample average of 37%, (refer to Table F11) This cohort see such an analysis as being 'most influential' when deciding to apply to the university. With this in mind 68.4% of this sample also selected 'most influential' when selecting the statement, 'believe the course is value for money,' (see Table F12). This sample was followed closely by the February 2017 intake at 63.5%, when the average over the four cohorts was 50%. This could be due to the particular segment being recruited; for instance, those wanting to progress their career via graduation, (Constrained Career Strivers) and those wanting to improve their skills, (Practical Upskillers). The latter in particular generally opt for healthcare studies. When comparing the intakes and courses chosen, 71.1% and 54.7% of students were recruited to the BA Healthcare Top-Ups and BA Healthcare respectively, (refer to Table F13). Finally, Table F14 represents 'type of household' and belief in value for money. 60.9% of homeowners believe that this statement does have an influence on them when selecting the university, compared with only 48.9% of potential applicants living with parents. This suggests that homeowners may have greater financial obligations such as mortgages, council tax, and family commitments than students living at home. In terms of marital status, Table F15 shows that 61.9% of married students and 73.7% of those living together also deem this statement as most significant within the decision making process. Monaghan and Weale (2017) argue that the extent of debt students get into when enrolling at university creates concerns due to the increase in student fees in England in 2012. It is argued by these researchers that the extent of rising student fees has implications for pensions, savings and paying a mortgage. Therefore, as the data reveals, students with financial commitments are cost conscious and regard 'value for money' as a significant influence when considering studying for a degree.

4.3 Affective commitment

In this section the results relating to 'emotions' are considered. The results vary depending on the selection of the statement to which the students most relate.

4.3.1 Affective commitment summary

Table 4.18 Emotional attachment to the University based on prior experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	48	9.4	18.8	18.8
	Less influential	60	11.7	23.4	42.2
	Least influential	148	28.9	57.8	100.0
	Total	256	50.0	100.0	
Missing	System	256	50.0		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.18 considers emotional attachment to the university based on prior university experience. As expected, this scored relatively low on the most and less influential scale. Other than the established distance learning students and those studying at a 'sister' institution, it is highly unlikely that new applicants to the HEP will have emotional ties because the university is relatively new, having only launched its brand in 2015. Nevertheless, if we look at Table 4.18 we can see that 42.2% did in fact feel some attachment to the university. This could be due to the supportive role of the course advisors and the marketing communications that are used, together with some distance learning experience.

Table 4.19 Location of the University

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	332	64.8	83.8	83.8
	Less influential	39	7.6	9.8	93.7
	Least influential	25	4.9	6.3	100.0
	Total	396	77.3	100.0	
Missing	System	116	22.7		
Total		512	100.0		

Tables 4.19, 4.20, 4.21, and 4.22 reveal data about the ‘location of the university’, ‘feeling safe’, ‘ease of acquiring accommodation’, and ‘being near to home and a supportive network’. Out of 396 students who selected the statement in Table 4.19, 93.7% think that the location of the university is important. As all five centres are located in a city centre, students are able to find a number of means of transport to attend the university.

Table 4.20 Feeling safe

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	171	33.4	67.3	67.3
	Less influential	60	11.7	23.6	90.9
	Least influential	23	4.5	9.1	100.0
	Total	254	49.6	100.0	
Missing	System	258	50.4		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.20 involves students feeling safe. Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992) argue that location is a contributory factor when students select a university. In this research it has been found that 90.9% of students feel ‘safe’ if they select this chosen HEP. This could be due to its being near to home and to a support network.

Table 4.21 Ease of acquiring accommodation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	45	8.8	25.0	25.0
	Less influential	68	13.3	37.8	62.8
	Least influential	67	13.1	37.2	100.0
	Total	180	35.2	100.0	
Missing	System	332	64.8		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.21 reveals that 62.8% of students consider ‘ease of acquiring accommodation’ as significant when choosing a university. This is interesting, as Table G1 in Appendix G reveals data that relates to a student’s ‘type of household’. Very few homeowners (8) answered this question. The group that finds this statement ‘most’ or ‘less’ influential, (but still has some influence), are those students living in rented accommodation. The HEP’s campuses do not currently offer accommodation, hence this could be the reason for renting. Participant A makes a point with regards to ‘traditional’ universities investing in buildings and suggests that universities have become: “commercialised and part of this is due to student accommodation. It now costs £5000 to £6000 typically for onsite student accommodation”. As the For-Profit University does not offer accommodation and therefore does not have this infrastructure to maintain, its course costs can reflect this. Instead of charging £9,000 per year, it is in a more competitive position to be able to charge a lower fee at £6,000 per year. This finding relates to the work of Molesworth, Scullion and Nixon (2011), who argue that the factors influencing student choice of university are increasingly complex. As Vaughan (2018) suggests, student fee structures has led to ‘frenzied’ competition within the market.

Table 4.22 Being near to home and a support network

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	110	21.5	60.1	60.1
	Less influential	36	7.0	19.7	79.8
	Least influential	37	7.2	20.2	100.0
	Total	183	35.7	100.0	
Missing	System	329	64.3		
Total		512	100.0		

Participant H reflects on university campuses as 'destination campuses' and notes that only 2% of the students are wanting to re-locate to the London area. This reveals an assumption that the attractiveness of the university due to 'destination' is not necessarily important in student choice. Table 4.22 reveals that 79.8% of students feel satisfied with respect to being near home and having access to a support network. This finding and the finding in Table 4.20, (90.9%) tends to challenge the university's own market research. Eposito (2016) argues that only 25% of those prospective students considered the university to be supportive and only 17% thought that the university was characterised by a sense of 'humanity'. It must be noted that those questioned as part of this market research were prospects only and not current students. Appendix G, Table G2 provides further insights into the importance of support and particularly feeling safe. Those who answered this question as 'most influential' were from the February 2017 (77.2%) and June 2017 (91.7%) cohorts. However, only 59% of students from the first cohort in October 2016 answered strongly in this regard. This again reveals the variability of the responses and highlights the complexity of the factors that determine choice of university.

Table 4.23 Social life with peers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	90	17.6	45.2	45.2
	Less influential	70	13.7	35.2	80.4
	Least influential	39	7.6	19.6	100.0
	Total	199	38.9	100.0	
Missing	System	313	61.1		
Total		512	100.0		

Davies et al. (2016) argue that an extrinsic motivator in selecting a university is having a rewarding social life with peers. Table 4.23 shows that 199 students responded to this statement, of which 80.4% did reveal, (in line with Davies et al. (2016)), that a social life with peers is important. This strong response could be due to the type of segment being recruited. The segments include: 'Disengaged Learners', 'Constrained Career Strivers' and 'Practical Upskillers'. The Disengaged Learners are generally quite a young age group who may find that the university can provide much social interaction. The Constrained Career Strivers and the Practical Upskillers may also value social interaction with others in order to share stories and experiences when they are at the university. Future consideration is being planned by the university to attempt to understand the motivations and attitudes of these segments further. Participant D states: "We need more detail to build a better picture of them (students) and also we need to compare them to the students we thought we would get." In general, it would appear that social life at the University has an important influence on student selection of the HEP.

Tables 4.24, 4,25 and 4.26 below can be related to each other with regard to lifestyle, facilities and support. Esposito (2016) finds that 43% of those prospects involved in the university's market research want greater accessibility to higher education, a view which is supported in this current research.

Table 4.24 Lifestyle perceptions and quality of life whilst studying

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	109	21.3	50.2	50.2
	Less influential	89	17.4	41.0	91.2
	Least influential	19	3.7	8.8	100.0
	Total	217	42.4	100.0	
Missing	System	295	57.6		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.24 provides data on quality of life whilst studying. 50.2% of students think that this is very influential when choosing the university. Only 8.8% of the respondents think that this statement is least influential. Esposito (2016) finds that 44% of the prospects thought that the Blended learning delivery was a flexible way to study and 36% also thought that they could study alongside work. Table 4.24

tends to concur with this finding, as does Table 4.48, (on page 231), which presents a cumulative percentage of flexibility and work at 56.7%. The interview participants refer to key words during their discussions, each of whom at some point during the interviews refer to "flexibility", "being able to work" and "fitting into their lifestyle". This relates to Coughlan's (2018) argument that the various Government agendas of creating innovative delivery of degrees (for example, 'commuter degrees', whereby students can study, but work simultaneously), is well-received by students.

Table 4.25 Practical factors associated with ease of access and study

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	121	23.6	64.4	64.4
	Less influential	49	9.6	26.1	90.4
	Least influential	18	3.5	9.6	100.0
	Total	188	36.7	100.0	
Missing	System	324	63.3		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.26 Available facilities, for example, library resources, student support

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	101	19.7	43.9	43.9
	Less influential	84	16.4	36.5	80.4
	Least influential	45	8.8	19.6	100.0
	Total	230	44.9	100.0	
Missing	System	282	55.1		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.25 reveals that a high cumulative percentage (90.4%) of students, are influenced by 'easy access to study'. Table 4.26 indicates that 80.4% of students are influenced by the nature of the 'available facilities' such as, library resources and student support. The findings relate to the work of Bodycott (2009), Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992) and Gajic (2012), who also emphasise the important effect that a university's facilities have on students choosing to study at university.

Table 4.27 On- campus clubs

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	22	4.3	10.2	10.2
	Less influential	38	7.4	17.7	27.9
	Least influential	155	30.3	72.1	100.0
	Total	215	42.0	100.0	
Missing	System	297	58.0		
Total		512	100.0		

Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014) refer to the importance and influence of on-campus clubs. Currently, the university does not place great emphasis on these clubs and this is reflected in the responses from the students. Table 4.27 reveals that in reality 72.1% of students are least influenced by such clubs. It may therefore be an ineffective initiative for the university to provide these facilities whilst the university is still in its infancy. These students spend only a limited time on campus and, therefore, unlike full time on-campus students, they may not see clubs as a top priority. The HEP's on-campus students are essentially part-time and, as previous findings suggest, put greater value on flexibility inherent in the Blended approach, which facilitates a combination of both employment and study. Other priorities may require development, such as effectively, monitoring the student segmentation strategy.

Table 4.28 Campus environment including a student friendly environment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	108	21.1	55.4	55.4
	Less influential	72	14.1	36.9	92.3
	Least influential	15	2.9	7.7	100.0
	Total	195	38.1	100.0	
Missing	System	317	61.9		
Total		512	100.0		

The following Table 4.28 focuses on anticipated student experience and how welcoming the campuses are. 55.4% of the respondents think that this statement is 'most influential' when selecting the university, and another 36.9% regard this as a ‘less influential’ factor. Cumulatively the ‘influential’ factor makes up 92.3% of those answering the question, with only 7.7% regarding this statement as ‘least influential’. Participant F discusses the campus environment during his interview and explains that he thinks the actual locations of the various campuses are important to potential university applicants: “We have struggled to show imagery and we don’t want to use false imagery…. But the campuses where we have had more than one intake generate a lot of interest from the family and the friends of the students who are studying there”. This statement relates to the data in Appendix G, where Table G3 shows that 57.8% of the February intake and 71.4% of the June intake place this statement as ‘most influential’ when making their decision to come to study, with both intakes responding over the average of 55.4% for the statement. A number of past studies also relate to the campus environment and its importance for students. Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992), for instance, identify the campus is an extrinsic motivator that attracts students. Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014) argue that there are a number of benefits of a student friendly environment. These include the potential for students to describe positively their university experiences to others. This helps to ‘sell’ the institution to further potential applicants.

Table 4.29 Encouragement to enrol from the University’s admissions advisors

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	112	21.9	46.9	46.9
	Less influential	102	19.9	42.7	89.5
	Least influential	25	4.9	10.5	100.0
	Total	239	46.7	100.0	
Missing	System	273	53.3		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.29 suggests that at 89.5% the admissions advisors have a positive effect on student conversion. Some of the interview participants deliberated over the usefulness and importance of the admissions advisors. Participants A, D, F, G and H refer to one-to-one support through the admissions process. In particular participant G explains how these members of staff are trained, indicating that they undertake mandatory training as if they are students being helped to understand course content, the ‘mechanics’ of Blended learning, and time management. This

participant states: “They now have a clearer understanding of the work students have to do outside of the class sessions….. There is 200 hours of stuff online which they know now.” Participant F refers to a “nurture track”: “Once they (admissions staff) understand what the person wants they will nurture them through the process”. Nurturing is useful and, as Evans (2012) indicates, support and guidance from admissions staff is important to ensure students know how to apply to an institution and to prepare them for their study period.

Participant C questions the current admissions process. This participant thinks that most students are under the impression that the course is an ‘accelerated degree’ and studying only has to occur two days a week. The consequence of this is: “We are taking people onto level 4 on the basis of experience who can’t cope with it, without a lot of support. We make it easy to apply.” He advocates: “making it more difficult”. Although Participant C considers potential barriers to easy entry, he thinks, nevertheless, that this is a complex aspect of the Blended pedagogy.

Table 4.30 Inclusion and accepted as being a part of the University

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	113	22.1	62.8	62.8
	Less influential	55	10.7	30.6	93.3
	Least influential	12	2.3	6.7	100.0
	Total	180	35.2	100.0	
Missing	System	332	64.8		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.30 presents data about ‘inclusion and acceptance’ within the university. Most students, (93.3%), out of the 180 who selected this statement think that being included is important. Esposito (2016) also finds that students want to be included when they are searching for their higher education provider. It reveals that out of the prospects surveyed, 39% think that being ‘included’ and having ‘open access’ is important.

Table 4.31 Participation and potential views being listened to

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	95	18.6	54.6	54.6
	Less influential	40	7.8	23.0	77.6
	Least influential	39	7.6	22.4	100.0
	Total	174	34.0	100.0	
Missing	System	338	66.0		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.31 presents data about the impact of 'participating' in higher education. The table shows, that 54.6% of students consider that 'participation' is a 'most influential' factor. There was time spent by the interviewees reflecting on the enormity of the decision to attend university in terms of time and finance. Participant B refers to students as being "customer-partners": "They should be shaping their own educational experience." This view tends to be in line with that of Mulya, (2019) who also endorses the role of the student-faculty partnership. When asked which 'stakeholders' are involved in the pedagogy and design of programmes, five of the eight interviewees refer to the students, (Participants B, C, F, G and H). A simple search on the university's website also reveals details on the role of the student representative and the 'student voice'. It is therefore, assumed that the university recognises that student participation is important.

Table 4.32 Enhancement of skills

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	136	26.6	74.7	74.7
	Less influential	37	7.2	20.3	95.1
	Least influential	9	1.8	4.9	100.0
	Total	182	35.5	100.0	
Missing	System	330	64.5		
Total		512	100.0		

'Enhancement of skills' is considered to be very important by the students. In Table 4.32, 74.7% of the students think that this statement is most influential when they are selecting their university. This Table also states that another 20.3% of students think that this is ‘less influential’, although still relevant. This is also supported to an extent by the university’s own market research. Eposito (2016) shows that the prospects targeted identify ‘goal achievement’ as important. 34% of prospective students responded to the question. Table 4.50, on page 236, is in line with this finding, indicating that 75.6% of the students think that the university will deliver better career opportunities as an outcome of obtaining a qualification. DfES (2016) stresses the importance of such outcomes and the development of students’ knowledge and skills. Davies et al. (2016) also place an emphasis on the importance of skill development as an intrinsic motivator in studying.

Tables 4.30, 4.31 and 4.32 are specifically included as statements under ‘Affective Commitment’ as the areas of inclusion, participation and enhancement of skills relate to Bernstein’s (2000) sociology of education. Participant C’s views relate to Bernstein’s work by reflecting on the perceived inequalities within higher education. He states: “We are taking people in that other universities won’t take. I don’t think there is anything wrong with it, people have to be given a chance.” Participant B refers to the importance of inclusion and this is embedded into the university’s culture. Bernstein (2000) questions the integrity of the ‘marketisation’ of higher education, the interview responses do suggest that this university is attempting to bridge ‘inequalities’ by offering open access. This reinforces the point about the complexity of higher education and that the English policy-makers (for example in DfES 2016) refer to a sector that is homogenous as opposed to acknowledging its diversity.

4.3.2 Affective commitment and end of survey questions

Although some of the end of survey responses have already been touched upon to support the above interpretation in section 4.3.1, it is important to review this data set in order to discern any further points of interest.

In relation to ‘emotional attachment’ to the university based on prior experience, some interesting findings are revealed, especially when focusing on the findings that are significantly higher than the average percentage. It is notable that, with respect to different cohorts, nearly 100 students (63.6%) who enrolled in the October 2017 period, (Table G4), think that the statement was least influential when selecting the university. This could be due to the recruitment agents recruiting for this time period and focusing on particular groups and individuals who would not have previous knowledge of the university. They may not have had previous study experience or exposure through the ‘sister’ college.

In terms of the ‘location’ of the university, 86.4% of the students (n=102), ‘Black or Black British – African’, students suggest that location is an influencing factor, (refer to Table G5). Participant C comments on the recruitment process and the focusing on particular ethnic groups and working with agents. Again, this ethnic group also presents the highest ‘most influential’ score when considering the variable, ‘feeling safe’. Table G6, reveals that 66% of the students selected this option as ‘most important’. This finding is constituted from 75.4% of ‘Black or Black British – African’ students. This statistic is supported by the findings of Evans (2012), who reveals that African-American students prefer to be near to home and having a support network from both their family and the institution. I argue that ‘culture’ does impact on students in terms of their choice of institution and location.

Table G7 presents findings on being ‘near to home and a support network’. The October 2016 cohort of students think that this is ‘most influential’ when deciding on choice of university. 76.7% of students opted for this as opposed to the 60.1% average for the statement. Table G8 draws attention to the Foundation Business course where 81.5% of students think that a support network is ‘very influential’. It can be argued that those who responded to this statement are from the ‘disengaged learner’ segment and therefore need support to be able to reduce the challenges of studying in higher education and re-entering the sector.

When considering ‘social life with peers’, 51.1% of February 2017 and 60% of June 2017 cohorts of students think that this is ‘most influential’, (Table G9). Those studying on the Foundation Business also agreed that this statement was most important at 53.1%, (see Table G10). However, when reviewing what happens ‘socially’ on the campus, those studying at Ealing did not place as much emphasis on this statement, (28% in contrast to the 45.2% average as shown in Table G11). Table G12 expresses the results in gender split. 50.4% of females deem this statement ‘most influential’, differing from males who only placed this at 39.4%. 27.3% of males state that this statement was ‘least influential’, in contrast to the 17.9% of females who selected this statement. A reason for this might be that the ‘segment’ responding to this statement. It could be that more female ‘Practical Upskillers’ are selecting this statement. This group is made up of 70% females, according to Eposito (2016). Noticeably, less than one in five students (19.6%) see ‘social life with peers’ as ‘least influential’.

Table G13 sets out gender differences in the findings relating to the ‘lifestyle perceptions and quality of life’ whilst studying based on gender. 56.6% of female students consider this as a ‘most influential’ factor, whereas only 41.9% of males opt for this. In general, however, 91.2% see this factor as quite influential. The interview participants discussed lifestyle and perceived this as being an important factor on student choice. Participant A refers to planning of classes around the school run.

With respect to ‘age’ grouping, 66.7% of those students aged 51 and above approved the importance of this statement, (refer to Table G14). This could be due to work status, motivation, or time commitments. Coughlan (2018) discusses the importance of being able to continue to work whilst studying. Once again, only a small minority in each age group (18-30 10%, 31-50 8.5% and +51 6.7%) assess lifestyle perceptions as least influential.

In terms of ‘practical factors’ and ‘ease of access’, Table G15 relates to cohort and demonstrates that 70.5% of the February 2017 cohort thinks that this statement is ‘most influential’ with respect to choosing a university. This could possibly relate to the target prospects during this time period, as Table G16 demonstrates the Top-ups opting for this ‘most influential’ statement, (with Healthcare at 73.5% and Business at 81.3%). Those enrolling on the top-up degrees may find this statement particularly relevant as they continue in employment whilst studying. As Eposito (2016) indicates, 36% of prospects place being able to work whilst studying as important.

Table G17 displays findings which make reference to availability of the HEP’s ‘facilities’. It is noticeable that the influence of this factor increases with each different age group. For instance, in the 18-30 age group only 27.9% find library resources and student support most influential, in contrast to the other groups: 31-50 (50%) and 51 and above (56.7%). Conversely, when it comes to being ‘least influential’ the figures are reversed: the 18-30 years group (30.9%), in contrast to the 31-50 years group (16.7%), and those aged 51 years and above (3.3%). I argue that this is due to the make-up of those students responding to this statement. It appears that the more ‘Disengaged Learners’ could opt for this statement as they are, in general, detached from the academic facilities.

Some of the main points of interest are found in different age groups when students consider the ‘campus environment’. Table G18 shows the results for this statement. On average, 55.4% of students think that this factor is ‘most influential’. This is, however, more evident in the 31-50 years age bracket at 60.9% and for those aged 51 years and above at 57.7%. Younger students, aged between18-30 years, are under the average for this option at 46.9%, although they do opt for the ‘less influential’ category at 40.6%. This could be due to differences in decision-making processes and perceptions of ‘affective commitment’ and ‘calculative commitment’. Those in the higher age groups may have more responsibilities and therefore take more factors into account when selecting a higher education provider. Table G19 refers to ‘type of household’ and this data supports the previous argument. 64.7% of homeowners and 60.8% of those living in rented accommodation think that this statement is ‘most influential’ as opposed to only 41.4% of those who are living with their parents. Table 20 indicates findings relating to campus environment. It is noticeable that the ‘Black or Black British – African’ group, who make up the overall majority of the participants, place much emphasis on the campus environment being ‘student friendly’. This could be due to cultural and community influences and feeling ‘safe,’ as Evans (2012) indicates. Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014) also place an emphasis on the importance of the campus environment. Only a minority in each ethnic group find the environment factor ‘least influential’.

In relation to ‘encouragement from course advisors’, there are two groupings that show intriguing results. Table G21, indicates that 51.2% of students studying at Tower Hill place this statement as ‘most influential’. This could be due to the central location of the campus and ease of access when attending open days. The Tower Hill campus is the largest of the five, with 168 students out of a total 239. In relation to ethnic grouping in Table G22, presents the ‘Black or Black British – African’ group as placing 58% prominence on the ‘most influential’ statement. I argue that this finding relates to the use of agencies targeting particular communities. The ‘Black or Black British – African’ group comprises over half of the students in total. Participant H discusses the work with ethnic groups as: “Making sure different communities have access to higher education.” Pimpa (2003) argues that many students trust recruitment agents and are influenced by these agencies over other stakeholders, including the students’ peers.

Finally, with reference to Bernstein (2000) on students ‘rights’, the findings raise a number of discussion points. Table G23 shows that 75% of the February 2017 cohort think that the statement on ‘inclusion’ is ‘most influential’ when they are selecting the university, exceeding the 62.8% average for this response. Healthcare students in particular consider this statement important. Table G24 presents these findings with Foundation Healthcare at 70.3% and the top-up Healthcare degree at 78.6%. I argue that this relates to the Practical Upskiller segment. 91.7% of BA Business students are influenced by ‘inclusion’ and ‘acceptance’ factors. Those students who are living in rented accommodation also think that this is an important consideration. Table G25 reveals that 70.5% of these students select the ‘most influential’ option in contrast to the 62.8% average. This reveals that moral principles are part of fabric of higher education. This thesis contends that the policy-makers who have created a market-place of higher education are not aware of this moral aspect of higher education in that the policy documents that have been published about higher education by English governments since 2003 do not emphasise the importance of this aspect of education.

With regards to ‘participation’, Table G26 reveals that 64.6% of females relate to this statement in contrast to 46.3% males. With reference to age-group options, those in the 31-50 years age group also think that at 66.2%, ‘participation’ is important to consider, (refer to Table G27). However, the findings are also high for the other age groups: 18-30 years (50.8%) and 51 years and above (52.2%). Once again those students living in rented accommodation (60.4%) consider participation when making their university selection to be most important, (refer to Table G28).

In relation to the ‘enhancement of skills’, Table G29 reveals data about marital status and it appears that 80.3% of single students and 93.3% of those living together place great emphasis on potential outcomes when selecting the university. This could be due to their motivation and future aspirations on employability and career opportunities. Varman, Biswatosh and Per-Skalen (2011) and Wilmott (2009) also support this view and argue that many students' priorities are to focus on vocational development and being work ready.

4.4 Corporate brand

This section is of particular importance as the university is new. Although the HEP has been operating under a different brand for some 30 years in partnership with a number of traditional universities, this has been predominantly in the distance learning sector, and not in the blended learning sector. The following analysis provides an overview of the main findings on 'brand'.

4.4.1 Corporate brand summary

Table 4.33 Accredited University

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	221	43.2	65.8	65.8
	Less influential	92	18.0	27.4	93.2
	Least influential	23	4.5	6.8	100.0
	Total	336	65.6	100.0	
Missing	System	176	34.4		
Total		512	100.0		

The first results in Table 4.33 are informative. 93.2% of students think that the accreditation of the university mostly influences or influences their choice to some degree. 336 students out of a possible 512 responded to this statement. Initially, there was some consideration given to the student understanding of the term 'accredited', however, because of the high response rate it seems that students are aware of the meaning of this word. I argue that this could be due to clarifying the information that is provided by the university, its website, and its course admissions advisors.

Teoh, Tan and Chong (2013), discuss information provision and how the content on a website can influence potential students. Table 4.42 on page 220, presents the methods of communication used. 20.7% of students were informed about the university through its website. The information provided by course advisors or agency staff wasn't particularly stressed as a useful information source by students, with only six students identifying this as a factor, (Table 4.43, on page 225). After in-depth discussions some of the interview participants place great emphasis on the course admissions advisor role because all students are required to speak to a member of the team. Participants B, D, E, F, G and H all emphasise the importance of offering support during the admissions process. Participant D states: "When someone applies they get a personal admissions advisor". This is a dedicated person allocated to the applicant to ensure he or she gains the correct information about the course for which they are applying for. Participant H confirms this approach: "We make sure we bring the right people into our programmes".

Table 4.34 Reputable programmes and courses

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	218	42.6	65.7	65.7
	Less influential	92	18.0	27.7	93.4
	Least influential	22	4.3	6.6	100.0
	Total	332	64.8	100.0	
Missing	System	180	35.2		
Total		512	100.0		

Tables 4.34 and 4.35 similarly relate to image and brand. Table 4.34 provides details regarding the reputation of the courses and the programmes. 65.7% of students think that this statement is 'most influential' and 27.7% regard this variable as being 'less influential', but useful.

Table 4.35 Quality brand and course content

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	148	28.9	70.5	70.5
	Less influential	56	10.9	26.7	97.1
	Least influential	6	1.2	2.9	100.0
	Total	210	41.0	100.0	
Missing	System	302	59.0		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.35 shows that 97.1% of students think that brand and course content is influential. It must be noted, however, that the response rate for the statement in Table 4.35 is relatively low at 41%. In order to improve its ‘image’, the university has also formed alliances with a number of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies. The course programmes are branded with the bodies’ logos and this endorses the reputation of the programmes and courses. For instance, the LLB Law degree is approved by the Solicitors Regulation Authority and the Bar Standards Board. Interview participants B, C, D and G identify these ‘stakeholders’ as important when developing pedagogy. Marzzorol and Souter (2002) also argue that the perceived ‘quality’ of the programme is a ‘pull’ factor when attracting students.

Table 4.36 Good reputation of the University

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	152	29.7	62.0	62.0
	Less influential	83	16.2	33.9	95.9
	Least influential	10	2.0	4.1	100.0
	Total	245	47.9	100.0	
Missing	System	267	52.1		
Total		512	100.0		

The next three tables specifically focus on reputation, brand and image. The university invested time and money into an initiative promoting the university name and testing advertising campaigns. The sample comprised of 1100 prospects. The research was conducted in two phases: between April 2016 and November 2016. According to Epostio (2016), awareness of the university brand increased nationally by 0.4%, from 4.0% recognition of the brand to 4.4%. Within London there was a shift of 2% from 4.3% in the first wave to 6.3% in the second. This demonstrates that the targeted and focused media messages in and around London is increasing the exposure of the university. Table 4.36 reveals that 95.9% of those students who responded to this statement think that the good reputation of the university is a factor that is influential in university choice. These findings support those of Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014) and Marzzorol and Souter (2002), who also argue in favour of the importance that students place on reputation when searching for a higher education institution.

Table 4.37 Trust the University brand

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	138	27.0	60.8	60.8
	Less influential	71	13.9	31.3	92.1
	Least influential	18	3.5	7.9	100.0
	Total	227	44.3	100.0	
Missing	System	285	55.7		
Total		512	100.0		

Table 4.37 examines students' trust in the university brand. Again the percentages are high for those who consider this statement relevant and favourable, cumulatively at 92.1%. This is an interesting finding; as part of the study conducted by the HEP in 2016 revealed that those who had knowledge of the brand would consider enrolling with the university.

Table 4.38 Good University image

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	124	24.2	57.1	57.1
	Less influential	76	14.8	35.0	92.2
	Least influential	17	3.3	7.8	100.0
	Total	217	42.4	100.0	
Missing	System	295	57.6		
Total		512	100.0		

A substantial amount of market research has been conducted with respect to university 'image'. The findings from Table 4.38 reveal that 57.1% of those who responded to this statement think that this is 'most influential' and 35% consider it to be 'less influential', although still an important factor. Esposito (2016) reveals that the university's market research indicates that respondents think that the image presented by the university is one of a supportive and innovative establishment. Interestingly, this view is not shared by one interview participant. Building credibility has been identified as an issue with Participant D when reflecting that: "People don't understand the difference between a private university and a public one. Is the For-Profit provider as credible as other universities? I'm not so sure that this is the perception" Gajic (2010) also reveals that students think that promoting the image of the university is important if the establishment is to grow. The differences in perceptions and realities require some attention and further investigation.

Table 4.39 University ranking and reviews in university guides based on the entire university experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	51	10.0	15.9	15.9
	Less influential	80	15.6	24.9	40.8
	Least influential	190	37.1	59.2	100.0
	Total	321	62.7	100.0	
Missing	System	191	37.3		
Total		512	100.0		

The statement in Table 4.39 relates to the university's position in league tables and reviews in university guides. To date the university has not taken part in the UK league tables and has only recently been involved in the National Student Survey. Reviews in forums such as 'Student Room' are positive and indicate that the HEP is gaining an overall rating of 4.2 positive feedback from students out of a possible score of 5.0. Sites such as this one are encouraged by the University as students do visit them. Participant D states: "One of our biggest challenges is Student Room and we try to get students to review us."

The results from Table 4.39, university ranking and reviews show at 59.2% are 'least influential' with respect to those students surveyed. I argue that this is due to the lack of presence in the league tables. However, this will change as the university continues to grow and develop. Molesworth, Scullion and Nixon (2011) advocate 'caution' with respect to the credibility of league tables, and argue that students review these league tables carefully in order to ensure they are selecting the most appropriate institution based on subject specialism. Once again, this reveals the complexity of the variables that can influence students in their choice of university.

Table 4.40 Recommended by others as a good university brand

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	102	19.9	41.6	41.6
	Less influential	105	20.5	42.9	84.5
	Least influential	38	7.4	15.5	100.0
	Total	245	47.9	100.0	
Missing	System	267	52.1		
Total		512	100.0		

‘Recommendations by others’ has been considered during the current study. The satisfaction section in this chapter focuses on such recommendations in Tables 4.6-4.9 on pages 185-186. Whilst the statements do not specifically use the word ‘good’, comparisons can be drawn, particularly when examining the findings in Table 4.7 on page 185. Table 4.40 reveals that 84.5% of students are influenced to a degree by what others say about the university. A specific theme identified from the interviews was potentially the importance of other students recommending the HEP to future applicants. Participant F considers this as being an opportunity to recruit students from within the ‘Disengaged segment’: “We can do student stories, but the best way is to get them (prospects) in front of potential students and their advocates. It’s going to be a big thing for us.” Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014) make reference to the importance of these stakeholder groups within their ‘financial seeker’ segment. I have discovered that recommendations and feedback from others is important. An interesting finding cross-references to Table 4.46 on page 230, where 20.3% of students recommend that the university does more to promote a ‘recommendation by others’ scheme. This is already in place on the University website. However, further means are required to promote this, if the university is to continue to grow.

Table 4.41 Influenced by social media

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Most influential	46	9.0	16.9	16.9
	Less influential	84	16.4	30.9	47.8
	Least influential	142	27.7	52.2	100.0
	Total	272	53.1	100.0	
Missing	System	240	46.9		
Total		512	100.0		

The statement in Table 4.41 is included specifically under the ‘Brand’ heading because of feedback from the pilot study and the ‘experts’. I argue that social media is likely to have some influence on brand and student selection of the university. Participant E, places an emphasis on the use of social media in order to interact with students and potential applicants: “Unlike other universities, our approach on social media is different because we think if people want to find out about courses they are always going to go to the website to read more. But on social media we have a bit of fun and engagement, and mainly our focus is to create brand awareness.” Table 4.41 reveals that 47.8% of students think that social media is reasonably influential, whereas, 52.2% think that it is ‘least influential’ when considering enrolling with the university.

Participant E reflects on social media: “It will only really happen when they (students) engage with the plan.” It is evident that the focus on social media is still ongoing and developing within the university. I argue that the social media strategy does need to be managed appropriately. Referring back to the previous discussion on ‘recommendations by others’, Hogan, Lemon and Libai, (2003) discuss the negative impact that social media, can have, in particular ‘word of mouth’. The university currently has a designated social media team to release news articles and monitor comments and feedback from students to address this matter.

4.4.2 Corporate brand summary and end of survey questions

Once again, the questions at the end of the survey have been analysed in relation to the statements under the 'Brand' heading. This section highlights the main distinguishing findings together with cross-references to the data in the appendix.

Appendix H, Table H1 presents the findings regarding ethnic group and 'reputable programmes and courses'. 62.8% of those students who answered the question think that the specific course and programmes influence their choice of university. There are, however, some differences in responses between ethnic groups, both in terms of frequencies and percentages. 'Black or Black British – African' (70.6%) and 'Other Black Background' (81.8%) place more importance on this statement. Note that these are majority groups totalling 78 students out of the 120. This could be due to these groups working more closely with direct agents and thus being more informed about the programmes and courses. These agencies are supported by University admissions course advisors. Participant H states: "We have a team on the ground that looks after agents." Evans (2012) also finds that course content and being supported by admissions staff helps minority groups in selecting a university.

Table H2 represents the perceived 'good reputation' of the university by age group. Noticeably, it is students in the 18-30 years age group that are 'less influenced' by the university's reputation at 41.5%, as opposed to the average 62% of students who are 'most influenced'. I argue that this could be due to the characteristic of the segment and lack of willingness to search for the 'best' university. This age group currently attracts many Disengaged Learners to the university. Two other groups, who responded differently to this statement, are indicated in Tables H3 and H4. 'Married' students (72.3%) and 'homeowners' (76.5%) place more emphasis on the 'most influential' option in this respect. I argue that this could be due to economic and social factors, such as income and lifestyle. These two groups of students may take a more informed decision when selecting choice of institution. Such findings complement the research of Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014) who refer to the 'deliberators' and 'financial seekers' who carefully source information when making their decisions on choice of institution.

Interestingly, Participant C draws attention to the issue of information and expresses concern as to the content available to students when selecting the institution: “I don’t think they particularly understand the choices they are making. I don’t think they come to us having made a rational decision.” The findings in Tables H3 and H4 contradict this reflection and indicate that, many students do take time to learn more about the university. Table H5 shows, again, that ‘Black or Black British – African’ students are more influenced by the reputation of the university, at 76.6%. I argue that this is due to the use of agents and the information that is then provided. Participant C explored the use of agents: “A lot of these people (agents) are working in ethnic groups and a lot of these people are from the same ethnic group, you know, in Mosques and Evangelical Churches.” Kopvillem (1992) tends to support the view of Participant C but argues that some agencies can mislead and/or exaggerate how good the institution is. Table H6 also shows this ethnic group being influenced strongly by university image, (77% in comparison to the 64.9% average).

Table H7 provides data about the ‘recommendations from others’ in attracting students to the university in respect of the academic programmes available. It is the top-up groups who are most influential in this respect, (Healthcare at 68.6% and Business at 52.6%) when the average for this category is 41.6%. I argue that this occurrence is due to internal marketing from the HEP’s ‘sister’ college. The university is owned privately and the parent company oversees the operations of a number of educational institutions. As one of the colleges is located in Tower Hill, this could be linked to natural recommendation and progression to the university. It appears that those Tower Hill students in Table H8 are slightly above the average at 47.9%. Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014), Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992) and Evans (2012) all refer to location as being an important factor in choice of university programme.

4.5 Marketing communication methods

Table 4.42 summaries the marketing communication methods used by the university to attract students.

Table 4.42 How did you find out about the University? Please select the most appropriate option by placing a tick next to it?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Through the website of the University	103	20.1	20.7	20.7
	Radio advertisement	1	.2	.2	20.9
	Bus advertisements	2	.4	.4	21.3
	Newspaper advertisements	17	3.3	3.4	24.7
	Prospectuses	3	.6	.6	25.4
	Open days	33	6.4	6.6	32.0
	From walking into the University.	8	1.6	1.6	33.6
	Career Fairs	29	5.7	5.8	39.4
	Social media, for example Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.	53	10.4	10.7	50.1
	Recommendations from others	198	38.7	39.8	89.9
	Search engines	50	9.8	10.1	100.0
	Total	497	97.1	100.0	
Missing	System	15	2.9		
Total		512	100.0		

The Table reveals that there are four main marketing communications methods used by potential applicants to the university. These are the website with a valid percentage of 20.7%; social media 10.7%; recommendations from others 39.8%; and search engines 10.1%. These methods are the most prominent in Appendix I, Tables 1-8, and relate to 'cohort', 'programme', 'campus', 'gender', 'age', 'household status', 'marital status' and 'ethnicity'. The findings of Teoh, Tan and Chong (2013) and Wilkins and Huisman (2011) shows that website usability is an important factor in recruitment, as it provides valuable information with regards to the university. Wilkins and Huisman (2011) place an emphasis on the importance of ‘recommendations by others’ and ‘the influence other stakeholders have on the student decision making process’. Consequently, it is useful to ‘triangulate’ the research in this study with these related findings.

Table 4.42 indicates that ‘social media’ and ‘search engines’, though important, receive less recognition in terms of influence from students at only 10.7% and 10.1% respectively. Participants A, B, D, E, F and H comment on the effective use of Google as a search engine, and the use of Facebook or Twitter in terms of recruitment. Participant A emphasises the importance of WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger. Participants A, B and D do, however, note the expense of pay-per-click advertising. Participant D acknowledges the lateness in the ‘sales pipeline’ of some students who use pay-per-click methods: “They were people who wanted to buy in the last part of the cycle and everything was very last minute. We really want to drive preference at the search point rather than at the end”. Chapman’s (1986) study on the stages of recruitment explores the influence institutions have at the ‘application stage’, (as Participant D identifies).

4.5.1 Marketing communication methods and end of survey questions

As indicated earlier, Appendix I breaks the methods down further via the end of survey questions. Table I1, ‘Cohort’, explores course start date. Two significant periods and methods stand out. In June 2017, 45.5% of those who applied for a course gained information through the university website. This shows the effectiveness of the website in providing students with information over a time period. Each of the three 2017 periods show an increase over the original October 2016 period. It is interesting to note that the perceptions of Participant A are somewhat different in respect of the usability of the website and suggests it lacks information when attracting students and recommends that the content is improved. This relates to the work of Teoh, Tan and Chong (2013) who discuss how websites can attract new students. Foroudi et al (2019) argue that in order for students to be engaged the website must be well-designed.

A further point of interest in this area corresponds to the criterion ‘recommendations by others’ in October 2016. Whereas the average response to this question was 39.8%, the response rate overall was 50%. I argue that this is due to the university operating out of a further education institution during this period (October 2016) and the emphasis that was being placed on the importance of increasing student numbers. (Note that the students who are based in Ealing have now been relocated to a purpose-built university building due to the expansion and increase of student numbers). ‘Recommendations from others’ has a relatively high percentage in all periods, though when the ‘website’ and ‘others’ data are compared the influence of the two factors appear to differ depending on period, (October 2016 [website 13.2%], [others 50%]; in contrast to June 2017 [website 45.5%, others 27.3%]). With reference to October 2017, it is noticeable that in absolute terms 65 students named the website, whilst 124 indicated the influence of others.

As indicated earlier, the four main methods of recruitment include the university’s website, social media, recommendations from others and search engines. This pattern of findings applies to Tables I3-I7, (which will be considered later). Each communication method is used to acquire useful information about specific courses on offer. The collected data presents the following findings with respect to student use of these methods when deciding on application and course choice: website – Foundation in Business (29%), LLB Law (41.7%); recommendations from others – important for all courses especially – Foundation Healthcare (47.9%), BA Healthcare Top-Up (52.5%), BA Healthcare (40.3%); social media – Foundation in Business (15.1%), BA Healthcare (16.7%); search engines – BA Business (17.9%), BSc Computing (18.4%), BA Healthcare (16.7%).

Table I3, ‘Campus’, data indicates that the largest number of students in absolute terms is at Tower Hill (335 out of 497). All other campuses have student numbers in double figures only. With specific regards to Tower Hill campus, 70 out of 103, (in absolute terms) used the website; 29 out of 53 used social media; 132 out of 198 were influenced by recommendations from others; and 31 out of 50 used search engines. The importance of recommendations by others is evident from percentages in all the other campuses: Ealing (47.6%), Holborn (27%), Birmingham (45.8%), and Manchester (31.6%). Clearly, the ‘recommendations’ factor is key in influencing students to apply for the HEP.

Table I4 ‘Gender’, also indicates the importance of the four main sources of information for students. This trend can be discerned in all of the other Tables in

Appendix I, (as will be demonstrated later). Table I4, sets out a number of differences when it comes to the gender of students. With respect to website use, the proportion of males compared with females opting for this medium of communication is 20.5% to 18.4%; a relatively small difference. Female use of social media at 11.7% exceeds male use at 8.2%. There are only slight gender differences also when it comes to the use of the other two important communication methods: ‘recommendations from others’ (males 40.4% and females 41%) and ‘search engines’ (males 10.5% and females 9.8%). The largest gender differences occur in a lesser option, ‘careers fairs’, with 8.6% females using this medium compared with a 2.9% response for males.

Table I5 Age, shows that the 18-30 years age group also seems to value attending careers fairs at 6.9%, (with the average percentage being 5.8%). Though, when measured in absolute terms the actual numbers in the 18-30 years age group opting for ‘open days’ and ‘careers fairs’ is relatively small, totalling 26 out of 145. Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014) find that visiting the actual institution provides useful information with respect to making a decision on choice of university. Open days are also discussed in the interview with Participant G. He recommends that in the future, “We can reimagine open days again. We can get tutors to give a tour to the parents and the kids get led around by student reps.”

With respect to the use of the website, this younger group are somewhat above the average at 22.8% (average 20.7%). The same applies to the use of social media (14.5% against the average of 10.7%), and search engines (17.2% against an average of 10.1%). Regarding open days, the two older age groups are less influenced. They are both below the average 6.6%: 31-50 years (4.6%) and 51 and above years (3.7%). With an average uptake of 5.8%, careers fairs show the 31-50 years category, at 7.3% are influenced, but, only one student out of 29 opting for this medium is from the 51 years and above category. Both of these categories are below the average of 20.7% with respect to the website: 31-50 years (17.4%) and 51 years and above (18.5%). These two age groups are below the averages of 10.7% and 10.1% respectively for social media and search engines, with the findings for the 31-50 years category at 10.1% and 7.8%; and the 51 years and above category at 1.9% and 1.9%. These ‘older’ age groups place much greater reliance on ‘recommendations from others’. The findings are

45.4% for the 31-50 years category and a very large percentage for the 51 years and above group at 64.8%, (with the average at 39.8%).

Table I6 shows those living with parents are more likely to attend open days, 11.7% against an average of 6.6%. I argue that the suggestion that is made to ‘enhance tours’ by Participant G could, therefore, attract this group of people in the future. The type of household also reveals strong evidence from those who own their own house to be influenced through ‘recommended from others’, 60.6% against an average of 39.8%. It can be argued that this may be due to economic factors and investment in education. Whilst not to draw a firm conclusion, it is pertinent to include the thoughts of Participant F at this point: “It is a lot of money to pay and at the end of the degree you are not guaranteed getting anything.” Consequently, some student groups might be more conscious about this possibility, and prefer to receive recommendations from people who they know. Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014) and Bowden (2011) are both in line with this view.

Table I7 examines the influence marital status has on the communication methods used. From the findings presented, divorced applicants, (at 76.5%) are more likely to use recommendations from others when selecting the university. The website, social media and search engines influence single students, with recommendations by others slightly below average, (refer to Table I7). Finally, Table I8 considers ethnic group and marketing communication methods, recommendations by others in particular. Those who consider themselves ‘Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi’ (66.7%) and ‘Other Black Background’ (68.8%), consider that ‘recommendations by others’ are very influential in selecting a university destination. This relates to the work of Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014), who argue that students from particular ethnic groups are influenced significantly by ‘word of mouth’ from others within their own cultural group.

4.5.2 Other marketing communication methods

Students were also given the opportunity to provide their own answer to the question regarding marketing communications. Only 15 students provide alternative responses and, consequently, in frequency and percentage terms, the findings are limited. However, it is still useful to include this data as part of the analysis, particularly as some of the methods are supported by the interview responses.

Table 4.43 How did you find out about the University?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	UCAS	7	1.4	46.7	46.7
	Agency	6	1.2	40.0	86.7
	Graduation event	1	.2	6.7	93.3
	Approached in the street	1	.2	6.7	100.0
	Total	15	2.9	100.0	
Missing	System	497	97.1		
Total		512	100.0		

The first two methods are currently being used and one is being explored further within the university. Participant B makes reference to the challenges that are associated with using agencies: “We have the UCAS process like other universities, that’s only 5% and we aim to grow 20% in the next 3-5 years. Next we have agent recruitment. Our first intake was 50% with these. Our goal is for this to reduce to 30% for the next intake. And then there is direct recruitment and this is targeted at 65% for the next recruitment. The students who have come from agents have not performed well.” Darrup-Boychuck (2015) argues that there can be a conflict of interests between agents and institutions as payment is commission based. It may be the case that some agents are simply placing students in universities for financial gain, rather than assessing the capability and quality of the applicant. This view is supported by Participant C. As Participant B is a member of the executive board the general view of using agencies is not positive. In fact, Participants C, D and H, all support and advocate the notion of more direct involvement with the 18 year old age group and more use of UCAS.

4.5.3 Marketing communication methods – effective and ineffective messages

The student participants suggested that the university is particularly interested in the effectiveness (or otherwise) of its communication methods. This data is revealed in the following table:

Table 4.44 Which method of communication and advertising did you find most informative?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	Search Engines	28	5.5	6.8	6.8
	Radio	2	.4	.5	7.3
	Website	100	19.5	24.3	31.6
	Leaflet	5	1.0	1.2	32.8
	Image	1	.2	.2	33.0
	Social Media	85	16.6	20.6	53.6
	Recommendations by others	75	14.6	18.2	71.8
	Course Advisors	8	1.6	1.9	73.8
	Billboards	2	.4	.5	74.3
	Bus	6	1.2	1.5	75.7
	Careers Fair	20	3.9	4.9	80.6
	Prospectus	5	1.0	1.2	81.8
	Email	10	2.0	2.4	84.2
	Open Day	39	7.6	9.5	93.7
	Agents	3	.6	.7	94.4
	Newspaper	12	2.3	2.9	97.3
	UCAS	7	1.4	1.7	99.0
	Advertisements	4	.8	1.0	100.0
	Total	412	80.5	100.0	

Out of a total of 512 participants in the survey, 412 students responded to this question. Those who did not respond either provided an answer that did not relate to marketing communications or provided ‘not applicable’. Largely in line with the methods already identified in section 4.5.1, students tend to be more inclined to agree that the university’s website, (24.3%), recommendation by others, (18.2%) and social media, (20.6%) are the more useful and informative means of communicating the university’s offer and provision.

Participant E provides a detailed account of the use of social media when attracting students to the university. She discusses the use of Facebook Live and using Facebook as a means of engagement and fun rather than sharing academic content. Participants A and B support this and suggest that the level of ‘tone’ in media messages is tailored more towards an audience and the segments rather than in the use of traditional academic language. Participant A reflects: “We want to be applicable to the segments we want to enter into in the UK….to use the language that they are comfortable with." Participant B notes: "We drive for a very integrated media-neutral theme. The information will be detailed in the same colours and tonality. The idea is to invoke a sense of familiarity." Eposito (2016) reveals that 22% of the 1100 adults surveyed have heard of the university via digital messages nationally and 31% in the London area. The most effective form of communication identified by the university itself is 'word of mouth'. 38% have heard of the university nationally and 31% within the London area. These figures are interesting and replicate the tone and feelings of current HEP students. This is also in line with the previous research of Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992).

Table 4.45 Which method of communication and advertising did you find least effective?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	Search Engines	25	4.9	7.9	7.9
	Radio	74	14.5	23.3	31.1
	Website	4	.8	1.3	32.4
	Leaflet	4	.8	1.3	33.6
	Social Media	24	4.7	7.5	41.2
	Recommendation by others	4	.8	1.3	42.5
	Course Advisors	8	1.6	2.5	45.0
	Billboards	49	9.6	15.4	60.4
	Bus	24	4.7	7.5	67.9
	Careers Fair	14	2.7	4.4	72.3
	Prospectus	4	.8	1.3	73.6
	Telephone	4	.8	1.3	74.8
	Open Day	16	3.1	5.0	79.9
	Newspaper	27	5.3	8.5	88.4
	UCAS	1	.2	.3	88.7
	Signage and Walk In	31	6.1	9.7	98.4
	Advertisements	5	1.0	1.6	100.0
	Total	318	62.1	100.0	

Students were then asked to consider those methods of communication that are less effective. Table 4.45 summarises these and identifies 'less effectiveness' in the use of radio at 23.3%, billboards at 15.4% and walk-in/signage at 9.7%. Eposito's (2016) market research also identifies difficulties with radio messages. From the 1100 adults questioned only 12% nationally could recall a message about the university and 15% within the London area. Those students who did provide more detail in relation to the use of radio and billboards commented that they, “didn’t hear any radio adverts” or they “don’t listen to the radio,” and they “didn’t see any billboard ads”. A number of students commented on the lack of signage outside of the university buildings that stopped them from walking in or knowing where the university is located. Participant D comments on the use of radio advertisements: “Things that don’t work well include radio advertising, and it’s hard to measure because there is no type of tracking. We are considering a different type of radio advertising, a bit more like a paid interview on air, a bit like the advertorials.”

The complexity of the effectiveness of newspaper adverts is revealed by Participant D. This participant explains how a general advert does not provide much specific information and that the use of “native marketing” or “paid editorials” is a preferred option. “We have these full page articles that we fill and it’s like native advertising, it looks like an article but it’s not, it’s written by a journalist. We obviously suggest the message and they write it for us…. We often get a lot of calls or applications from these articles”.

4.5.4 Marketing communication methods – recommendations from students

The respondents were ‘forthcoming’ over recommendations for improvements to the university’s marketing communication methods. The following Table 4.46 identifies a number of suggestions from students. Whilst many of these strategies are already being used by the university, ‘student reach’ does not appear to be quite right yet, as students are offering original suggestions on how to improve communication strategies. The main recommendations identified by students include: signage outside the centres at 25.1%, recommendation schemes at 20.3%, the use of billboards at 9.2% and attendance at schools, colleges and workplaces at 9.2%. Currently, the university does offer recommendation schemes through its website and uses billboards. It is evident though that the exposure to these forms of communication is not adequate enough. Whether the use of billboards is successful remains to be seen as it is difficult to measure the efficacy of this strategy. Participant H reflects that the use of offline activity can be challenging: “It’s difficult to measure the effectiveness of some of the things we do. We do a lot of offline activity on buses, bus shelters, posters around London and we can never measure how effective those approaches have been”

The ‘recommend a friend’ scheme is important. According to Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992) students are more likely to select an institution if there is a recommendation by someone else. Signage outside of the campuses is logical and should help to attract more ‘walk-in’ traffic.

The final recommendation, ‘attendance at schools, colleges and workplaces’, makes sense given the ideas from the interview participants. Participants B, C, D, F and H, all discuss the importance of targeting the school/college leavers market: and Participants B and H explore the possibility of targeting apprenticeships and outreach programmes. Thus, it can be seen that students and university staff recognise the importance of such initiatives. Chapman (1986) supports the view of targeting schools and colleges as he suggests pre-searching for an institution can occur years before the student is ready to apply.

Table 4.46 Do you have any recommendations which might improve the exposure of the University when recruiting students?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	More Open Days	1	.2	.5	.5
	TV advertisements	5	1.0	2.4	2.9
	Using Job Centre Work Skills	2	.4	1.0	3.9
	Recommendation Schemes	42	8.2	20.3	24.2
	Signage outside the centres	52	10.2	25.1	49.3
	Online advertisements and use of social media	16	3.1	7.7	57.0
	Radio	1	.2	.5	57.5
	Attendance at graduation Events	2	.4	1.0	58.5
	Scholarships	1	.2	.5	58.9
	Public Transport Advertising	8	1.6	3.9	62.8
	Agencies	6	1.2	2.9	65.7
	Billboards	19	3.7	9.2	74.9
	More personal interaction with course advisors	5	1.0	2.4	77.3
	Attendance at schools, colleges and workplaces	19	3.7	9.2	86.5
	Flyers and Leaflets	11	2.1	5.3	91.8
	Newspaper	9	1.8	4.3	96.1
	Hard copies of prospectuses	3	.6	1.4	97.6
	Advertising the university facilities	3	.6	1.4	99.0
	Careers Fairs	2	.4	1.0	100.0
	Total	207	40.4	100.0	
Missing	System	305	59.6		
Total		512	100.0		

4.6 Blended pedagogy

Students were asked about their thoughts on the Blended approach to learning. Firstly, students were asked to make a judgement as to whether they considered Blended learning to be ‘traditional academia’ or more ‘vocational and work-based’. Secondly, students were then asked to explain what they liked and disliked about the way in which the courses were delivered. Intriguingly, none of the students had anything negative to report on Blended learning.

4.6.1 Blended pedagogy - overview of the results

Table 4.47 Is blended traditional academic or vocational and work based?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Traditional academic	127	24.8	30.9	30.9
	Vocational and work based	233	45.5	56.7	87.6
	Both	51	10.0	12.4	100.0
	Total	411	80.3	100.0	
Missing	System	101	19.7		
Total		512	100.0		

The results of the survey in Table 4.47, indicate that out of those who responded to this question, 56.7% think that Blended learning is ‘vocational and work-based’, 30.9% consider this form of pedagogy to be ‘traditional academic’ and 12.4% think that it is both ‘academic’ due to it being taught ‘online’ and ‘offline’ and also ‘work-based’ as it uses real life examples.

Table 4.48 Blended Options

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Flexible	173	33.8	43.8	43.8
	Can still work	51	10.0	12.9	56.7
	Good level of tutor support	11	2.1	2.8	59.5
	Well-developed content on and offline	154	30.1	39.0	98.5
	Cost advantages	6	1.2	1.5	100.0
	Total	395	77.1	100.0	
Missing	System	117	22.9		
Total		512	100.0		

The benefits of Blended learning in Table 4.48 appear to have an impact on the students’ choice of higher education provider and five thematic themes are identified from the responses to the open ended question in the survey. These themes include: flexibility; ability to work whilst studying; a good level of tutor support; well-developed content both online and offline; and finally, there are cost advantages.

As can be observed 43.8% of the sample consider the two days a week in-class teaching element provides flexibility in their circumstances, and 12.9% make specific reference to the ability to continue to work. The ability to continue to work has been recognised by the interviewees as a valuable dimension of Blended learning when they respond to the notion of changes in pedagogical approach and delivery. Participants A, D, E, F, G and H all provide an explanation of the 12 hours contact time being split over two days. The term 'flexibility' is referred to by all of these participants. Participant E states: "I think it is the need of the hour really because not everybody can quit their job and just cut ties. Blended learning gives them flexibility". This is in line with the findings of Coughlan (2018) who reports on the Conservative Government's intention to review the higher education sector and encourage more innovative ways to deliver programmes in order to enable students to continue to work. Angulo (2011) also suggests that employment opportunities during studying are important regarding student choice. Participant F suggests: "Essentially we offer flexible learning; I think the market is driving that. They want to get a degree with a bit of face-to-face and online." The notion of 'flexibility' fits in well with the segmentation strategy of the provider. As indicated earlier, four groups have been identified as being suitable for Blended learning. These will be explained in more detail in Table 4.49.

Table 4.49 Segmentation Strategy Watson, 2018 adapted from Epostio, 2015

Constrained Career Strivers	Motivated by technology, want to progress career with a reputable qualification, time-poor, and geographically constrained, worry about cost and debt, and are interested in Business, Accounting, Computing, English. 19% of the mature higher education sector market.
Disengaged Learners	Mix of young and mature learners. Disengaged from education and going back is something they are interested in, but this is a risk. Require guidance and support. 16% of the mature higher education sector market
Practical Upskillers	Mostly women who are not confident about going to university. They want to develop practical skills to enhance both their personal and professional paths. Vocational focus, studying at home and online but not tech savvy. Need support to gain confidence and to make decisions. 25% of the mature higher education sector market.
Digital Achievers	Early adopters of technology and high users of social platforms. Very ambitious they want to get to the top of their chosen career. They have a hard-work ethos and like structured environments. Interested in Law, Business, Leadership, Accountancy, Computing, and Health/Sciences. 10% of the mature higher education sector market.

Three out of the four segments identified are in work and therefore require a pedagogy that helps them to achieve their degree, but at the same time fits in with their work life. These segments are: Constrained Career Strivers, Practical Upskillers and Digital Achievers. From the interviewees, only Participant B refers to the last segment. This may be due to the small number of such students at present, who are potentially postgraduate students. Currently, postgraduate studies are only delivered in Holborn. However, later in the research interviews, Participant H does refer to this group and the potential development of the postgraduate market.

Whilst the vocational and work-based advantages of Blended delivery are recognised, it still remains the case that 30.9% of the survey participants think that their courses are ‘traditional academic programmes’, and 12.4% of the participants think that Blended learning is a mix of both academic and vocational learning, (refer to Table 4.47). It appears to be the case that academic courses are still considered as being important by many students. This is an interesting finding especially as Beretelsen (2008), and Boronski and Hassan (2015) argue that HEIs are prioritising vocational programmes to the detriment of the so-called pure search for knowledge in itself types of degrees.

Another key factor relating to Blended delivery is the development of the online and offline content. A total of 154 students in Table 4.48, (that is 39%), regard the way in which the materials are developed defines the Blended learning approach. Feedback from the open-ended responses reveals that some students are of the view that the online resources are an addition to the class taught elements. This differs from how the university envisages its Blended learning programmes. Participants C, D, E, G and H discuss this approach. Participant C notes that: “We start with the fact that students have online materials and content and what we are looking at is finding a way to give some face-to-face experience.” This participant also acknowledges that some students see the Blended delivery differently, “Most people come at it through a classroom lens and then try to convert it to an online programme. I don’t believe students know what Blended learning is.” Although 39% of students appear satisfied with the materials it is evident that there is still some work to be done with clarity of communication in this area of the curriculum.

4.6.2 Blended pedagogy and end of survey questions

The following section is cross referenced to Appendix J. In terms of start dates and cohorts of students, there did not appear to be any significant differences with regards to Blended pedagogy. The majority of students perceive the programmes to be vocational and work based, (refer to Table J1).This is also supported with reference to the breakdown of courses, (refer to Table J2). However, there did appear to be a greater divide in percentages in some courses. For instance, the

Foundation Business and Foundation Healthcare spiked under ‘vocational’ at 60.3% and 63.6%. This could be due to the segment of students that these programmes are attracting. Participant B makes the following assumption: “We had a lot of Practical Upskillers. I would say that a significant number of the Practical Upskillers were from particular ethnic communities. So we’ve had a lot of Black African and Caribbean women interested in studying healthcare qualifications.” Participant C also refers to Practical Upskillers being targeted for these programmes: “We are probably recruiting Upskillers at a lower level so these groups were targeted.” Interestingly, the comments of Participant B contradict the data from Black Caribbean students, Table J3, as their responses indicate that they consider Blended learning to be ‘traditional academic’, at 72.7%, rather than ‘work-based’ at 27.3%. This reveals the complexity of the factors that are shaping the curriculum at the university and how they are interpreted by the provider.

Two programmes that set out Blended learning as ‘work-based’ and ‘vocational’ are the BA Business top-up, at 61.9% and the BA Healthcare top-up, at 63.5%, (refer to Table J2). These two programmes are also linked to the provider’s segmentation strategy of the Constrained Career Striver. Esposito (2015) finds that this segment generally wants to progress in their career, and consequently believes a top-up degree can help with this. Participant F suggests that the Constrained Career Strivers are characterised by being currently in employment and that these students are looking: “To get into management by gaining an undergraduate degree, or wanting to change their career, or get a promotion”. This, again, reveals the complexity of factors that are shaping the nature of the curriculum at the university.

Table J4 and J5 consider the ‘campus’ of study and the ‘gender’ division of the students with respect to interpretations of Blended learning. Once again, Blended learning is interpreted as being both ‘work-based’ and ‘academic’. However, there are variations according to campus (Tower Hill [55%]; Holborn [50%]; and Manchester [35.7%]). This illustrates, once more, the complexity of interpretation that is occurring with respect to student perception of the curriculum. This complexity is reinforced by Table J6, as those students in the 51+ years age group place a greater emphasis on Blended learning as being a combination of ‘vocational’ and ‘academic’ work.

4.7 Anticipated student outcomes

According to several themes derived from the literature review it is asserted that marketisation has influenced the designing of a number of academic curricula. Instead of being institution-led, programmes are being developed in partnership with students. Liu (2009) and Meadmore (1998) both argue that institutions must examine their markets in order to address student needs. Coughlan (2018) explains that in February 2018 the Government announced its review of the higher education sector. Part of this review was to examine current degree provision and to encourage institutions and providers to offer alternative routes to gaining a degree. The Government recommended a 'commuter degree', or shorter degree that can be undertaken whilst working.

Table 4.50 What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Advance employment and career opportunities	354	69.1	75.6	75.6
	A good degree	102	19.9	21.8	97.4
	Better quality of life	12	2.3	2.6	100.0
	Total	468	91.4	100.0	
Missing	System	44	8.6		
Total		512	100.0		

The students were asked what they hoped would be the outcomes of their courses. This was an open-ended question, and three main themes are derived from the results. These are categorised as: 'advance employment and career opportunities'; 'a good degree'; and 'a better quality of life'. Table 4.50 reveals that 75.6% of students who answered this question consider that 'advancement in employment and career opportunities' to be their main reasons for completing the course. This is supported by the earlier literature from Chapter 2 and tends to be the common assumptions amongst the interview participants. The DfES (2016) encourages institutions to provide students with employability skills. When asked how the provider delivers its programmes, Participant A discusses the Blended pedagogy and how it relates to employer needs: "We believe there are four values, they are key attributes that employers see and will differentiate a graduate within the Blended learning courses. We have three layers now, we have knowledge, we have skills, but we also have graduate attributes and these are being taught in parallel, and these are what will differentiate the students, because they will be able to solve problems".

There is a significant drop in percentage with respect to the next category, 'gaining a good degree'. Only 21.8% of students envisage their end goal as gaining a good qualification. This view is in line with a number of studies. For instance, Grosjean (2004) argues that students consider higher education as an initial step into employment. It appears that the traditional view of academia tends not to be a priority for most of these students. However, Beaty, Gibbs and Morgan (1997) indicate that some students do still want to immerse themselves in theory and subject content, together with reflecting on and engaging with academia. Ingleby (2015) reveals that the tutors in his study want to develop students' minds and encourage them to become more reflective about what they are actually learning. Therefore, the outcome of a "good" degree is still considered important for some students, both in terms of academic development and work-readiness. Finally, only 2.6% of students are completing the degree for a 'better quality of life'. In this regard, much depends upon how the students define the better quality of life. This, again, reveals the complex set of variables influencing the higher education curriculum.

4.7.1 Anticipated student outcomes and end of survey questions

The outcomes were then compared to the demographic, geographic, and study factors in order to determine the emergence of any patterns and themes. In this subsection, Appendix K is cross-referenced with respect to this next analysis of the results. Table K1 considers the factors influencing the different intakes. All of them place 'advance employment and career opportunities' as the main goal and outcome for their programmes. The overall average response to the question about what they hope to achieve after course completion was 75.6%. Only the June 2017 cohort at 72.7% was lower. With reference to the 'good degree', the latter June 2017 and October 2017 intakes at 22.7 % and 23.3% respectively, exceeded the 21.8% average. In relation to 'programmes' once more this appears to be the predominant factor influencing degree completion. There were some differences in the results as illustrated in Table K2. These referred to Foundation Computing, the BA Psychology and Criminology, and the MBA. Once again, it is ‘advance employment and career opportunities’ that dominates the responses across the programmes. Foundation Business (76.9%), BA Business (78.8%), BA Healthcare Top-up (80.4%), BSc Computing (92.1%) and BA Business Top-up (78%) are all above the average percentage for the response at (75.6%).

Table K3 shows the three factors in relation to ‘geographic location’. Responses in the centres again place ‘advance employment and career opportunities’ as the primary goal for completing the course. However, this was not necessarily the only reason. In Holborn 56.8% of those sampled place this reason first. However, a relatively large 40.5% also identify gaining a ‘good degree’ as an important outcome of the course. Esposito (2016) highlights the importance of course design and developing students academically. Contrary to this positive portrayal of the students wanting to earn a good degree, Participant B suggests and assumes that there is a segment of the student population who think they are ‘entitled’ to a degree: “I think a certain segment of UK students, middle class, white kids have a certain sense of entitlement and an expectation that they pay the money, take the debt, and pop out the other end”. This has been echoed in the work of Waimer and Vining (1999) who find that students ‘expect’ to be satisfied with appropriate programmes that are largely vocational and which then morph into the ‘real world’ or business environment upon completion of their course. Whether, this argument is true of some of the student population in Holborn would require further research in order to understand the attitudinal and behavioural aspects of their academic life. This is a further example of the complexity of factors that are influencing the higher education market.

There appears to be no significant difference between genders, (see Table K4). Once more ‘advancement in employment and career’ is shown as most important. Similarly, with age, type of household, marital status and ethnic group, employment ranks as the main objective of completing the courses successfully. In Tables K4, K5, K6, K7 and K8, the percentage differences between ‘advance employment’ and a ‘good degree’ are generally in favour of advance employment and career opportunities. Interestingly, the DfE (2018) are reviewing post 18 education and attempting to ensure that graduates are equipped with the skills to be ‘work ready’. The overall view appears, therefore, to confirm that employability is the most important goal of the student and is supported by current Government agendas, in addition to a large proportion of academic literature. In summary advancement in employment and career opportunities is the main aim of the students who completed the survey. This appears to fit in with the underlying principles and views of today’s policy-makers who are shaping the higher education sector in England (despite its critics, for example Ingleby (2015)).

4.8 Discussion

The results reveal a number of significant findings relating to the central themes of the thesis. Section 4.8 will now provide a summary of the findings in relation to the conceptual framework on page 248. It may be useful to review the framework as this has given this current research both focus and direction. Whilst the themes presented on the framework have not been statistically measured to prove or disprove a hypothesis, it is still useful to review these as they provide direction for an inductive research approach.

In summary, Chapter 4 confirms a number of links to the earlier literature and the development of marketisation within the higher education sector. The chapter also reveals the complexities of the market and the curriculum, particularly with regards to how to cater for the needs of the student, as ‘customer’, ‘consumer’, or ‘student-partner’.

4.8.1 Satisfaction

In terms of student ‘satisfaction’, the findings reveal a number of contributory factors that impact positively on student choice. In contrast, some findings which are identified as important in the literature are currently not considered as important by the HEP’s students. Table 4.51 presents the summary of student satisfaction.

Table 4.51 - Satisfaction-experience between the student/educator relationships – hygiene & motivator factors

+ Positive Factors	- Least Important Factors
• Course content (EH) • Access to technology (EH) • Blended approach (EH) • Practical skills development (IM) • Service received and interactions with the University (EH) • Recommendations by peers (EM) • Demanding higher wages (IM) • Employment opportunities (IM)	• Recommendation by employer (EM) • Recommendation by parent (EM) • Recommendation by school or college (EM) • Past University experience (IM) • Past tutor experience (IM)

The coding of the results refers to whether the factors are intrinsic (I) or extrinsic (E), motivators (M) or hygiene (H) factors. The table indicates that the 'positive' influencers are a mix of both 'hygiene' factors, (in other words products and services expected as overt factors), and 'motivators', (the more covert factors pulling at students' emotions). Students tend to expect course content, access, teaching delivery and services to be available and delivered to a satisfactory standard when selecting a university. Hatfield and Taylor (1998) support this view and argue that HEIs should meet the specific needs of students. Motivators that draw students internally to the university include skills development and the prospects of being able to acquire higher wages and employment. Recommendations by peers also reveal positive responses from students and Gustafsson, Johnson and Roos (2005) also draw attention to the significance of this factor.

In contrast to the above, the least important factors in the student decision making process come from employers, parents, schools and colleges. These have been classed as extrinsic motivators. I argue that this is due to the particular segments being targeted. For instance, parents' views bear little credence and weighting on student choice other than with the 'Disengaged Learner'. It is likely that the other three segments include more mature adults capable of making their own decisions. Past university experience and past tutor experience have been appraised as being internal motivators because only the students themselves will know how they feel about their own past experience. As previously indicated, these factors have ranked lower in student preferences due to the newness of the university.

4.8.2 Calculative commitment

The results for 'calculative commitment' are deemed to be 'hygiene' factors because they affect the students overtly and are more 'rationalised' factors when making university selection. Angulo, Pergelova and Rialp (2010), Fullerton (2003), and Rauyruen and Miller (2007) support this view. Angulo, Pergelova and Rialp (2010) define some types of students as 'rational thinkers' who make decisions based on economic welfare. All four statements gained a high rating, the highest influencing factor cumulatively being the 'cost of the course', followed by 'access to finance', 'performing a cost-benefit analysis' and then determining whether the course is 'value for money'. This is in stark contrast to Bowden (2011) who finds that cost is less of a student influence in terms of attachment to a university. This could be due to Bowden's (2011) focus being more directed to loyalty rather than procurement of the student. Economic factors such as these are also identified as significant by Wilkins & Huisman (2011). Students who perform a cost-benefit analysis are able to estimate the cost of the course or debt versus outcome, living expenses, and future pecuniary value.

4.8.3 Affective commitment

The factors under 'affective commitment' are more varied when it comes to influencing students in their choices of universities. Most statements attached to affective commitment are considered as 'cumulatively influential'. Table 4.52 presents a summary of the current findings in relation to the descriptor from the conceptual framework.

Table 4.52 - Affective commitment- emotions towards the institution and location, student rights – motivator factors

+ Positive Factors	- Least Important Factors
• Location (EM) • Feeling safe (IM) • Being near to home and a support network (EIM) • Social life with peers (EM) • Lifestyle perceptions (IM) • Practical factors associated with ease of access and study (EM) • Available facilities (EM) • Campus environment (EM) • Encouragement to enrol (EM) • Inclusion and being accepted (SR/IM) • Participation and potential views being listened to (SR/IM) • Enhancement of skills (SR/IM) • Acquiring accommodation (EM)	• Emotional attachment (IM) • On campus clubs (EM)

Once more, the factors have been coded, although slightly differently this time. The codes accommodate three themes, these are: ‘extrinsic motivators’ (EM), ‘intrinsic motivators’ (IM) and ‘students’ rights’ (SR). Although some factors can be categorised as hygiene factors, such as, location, I argue that the statements are constructed based on ‘emotions’ and consequently, the results are based on feelings and the students’ impressions and expectations.

Extrinsic motivators tend to be overt persuaders, and these include: location, being near to home, social life with peers, practical factors, available facilities, campus environment, encouragement to enrol, and acquiring accommodation. The importance of these factors are noted in the works of Bartram (2000), (when exploring accessibility), Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992), and Davies et al. (2016). In terms of location and social interactions, feeling safe; support network; lifestyle perceptions; inclusion and acceptance; and participation; and enhancement of skills are examples of factors influencing student choice of university. Harrison-Walker (2001) also stress the importance of emotions and attachment. Finally, in relation to Bernstein’s (2000) concept of students’ rights, it appears that the current findings suggest that this is an important element in selecting the HEP. This represents a positive reflection of the university’s values and 'doing the right thing', (For-Profit HEI, 2016). I argue that ensuring that students are included, can participate and are enabled to develop their skills is perceived as important for student learning experience and achievement.

4.8.4 Corporate brand

'Corporate brand' is another theme in this study, and the responses from students are informative. Given the newness of the university, brand awareness is considered by Participants C and D to be limited. Participant C states: "It's about building a brand, you can't suddenly recruit students overnight". Table 4.53 shows the findings with regards to positive influencing factors and least influencing factors.

Table 4.53 - Corporate brand – motivator factors

+ Positive Factors	- Least Important Factors
• Accredited university (EM) • Reputable programmes (EM) • Trust the brand (IM) • Quality brand (IM) • Good reputation (EM) • Good image (IM) • Recommended by others as a good brand (EM)	• University ranking and reviews (EM) • Influenced by social media (EM)

The findings reveal that factors such as being an accredited university, having reputable programmes, a good reputation, and being recommended by others as a good brand can be established using a number of strategies. These strategies include the provision of informative prospectuses, alliances with Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies, reviews on forums such as Student Room, and confirmation of other stakeholder involvement via a tick box on the application form. Other motivators are more complex to measure and understand. These include the intrinsic factors: trust the brand, quality brand and good image. These are more emotive attachments to the university, and I argue that this requires further investigation through more research. Further understanding of why students select these options will aid the university as it develops its future marketing campaigns. It could be that the current marketing campaigns are working well around the various geographical locations, or the agent and admissions teams are communicating the brand and being persuasive in their advocacy for the university. Morgan and Hunt (1994) argue that ‘trust’ is a dominant factor when students make their choice of brand.

The two extrinsic motivators that are considered to be least important are ‘university ranking and reviews’, and the ‘use of social media’. I argue that these factors are least important because the university is so new and that these motivators may change positively over time. Once again, the above complexity reveals the fascinating nature of the current case study.

4.8.5 Segmentation

The results from the interviews reveal the four main segments currently being targeted by the university. As indicated earlier these include: ‘Constrained Career Striver’, ‘Practical Upskiller’, ‘Disengaged Learner’ and ‘Digital Achievers’. The Constrained Career Strivers and the Practical Upskillers tend to enrol onto Healthcare Management and Business courses. Eposito (2015) reveals that these two segments make up 44% of the ‘mature’ higher education market. The Disengaged Learners however are, also important to the university. A review regarding how to progress these students may be necessary to enable the students to remain ‘on track’. Participant C states: “I don’t think we fully appreciated how disengaged some of the disengaged learners actually are.” The Digital Achievers are in a longer term plan of market development within the university. Whilst there has been some breakthrough in the Postgraduate market this is still limited to one geographic location, (Holborn). Participant B currently refers to these scholars as merely: “A handful of students.”

I argue that there are interesting characteristics associated with these segments of students. Participants D and G suggest narrowing the segments further in order to understand in more detail the motivations of the students. Participants C and H firmly advocate the development of the school and college markets, post 18+. Esposito (2015) states that this segment of the market makes up potentially 24% of the students. Utilising collaborative links with UCAS is being planned at the HEP. Outreach programmes with schools and colleges are also being developed in order to start attracting students earlier in the sales pipeline. Finally, Participants

B and H suggest establishing more links with employers by extending the apprenticeship provision both at an undergraduate and postgraduate level.

4.8.6 Recruitment strategies

The findings from the survey, interview, and secondary sources outline the various recruitment strategies and marketing communication methods that attract students to the university. Table 4.54 presents the main findings of those methods that appear significant in influencing students, together with factors that are less effective.

Table 4.54 - Recruitment strategies – Push and pull strategies stakeholder influence

+ Positive Strategies	- Less Effective Strategies
• Website (Pull) • Social media (Pull) • Recommendations by others (Stakeholder – Pull) • Open days (Push)	• Radio (Pull) • Billboards (Pull) • Signage and walk-ins (Push/Pull)

The information contained on the university website appears to be working well and students are converting to the application stage through this method. Teoh, Tan and Chong (2013) stress the importance of making websites user-friendly and informative. Social media has its own dedicated team within the university. Participant E spoke at length regarding the purpose, strategy, and importance of this method of recruitment. Esposito (2016) explains how the university is considered modern and with this comes a 'modern tone' of communication. 50% of the prospective students questioned in the market research agreed with this assessment of the university. Participant E suggests that the purpose of using social media is to create fun, excitement and engagement; it is not used for academic purposes.

In terms of recommendations for improvements there are two main methods of marketing communications that are put forward by the students, together with two methods that in terms of frequencies, are also useful to consider. The two methods scoring as 'most useful' include: a 'recommendation scheme' for students and 'signage' outside of the buildings. This supports the work of Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014) and Wilkins and Huisman (2011). The two lesser-rated methods of communication include: attending schools, colleges and workplaces, and the extended use of billboards. Evans (2012) also suggests that schools and colleges are useful to help to guide students and encouraging them to apply for university.

4.8.7 Summary

In relation to the conceptual framework, all of the themes do have an influence on selection and choice of university. Calculative costs indicate that all factors relating to finance are influential. I argue that this is due to the more limited options under this section and that it is likely that the segments are quite cost-conscious. The Practical Upskillers, for instance, are predominately female in lower paid jobs, (Eposito, 2015). The findings in Tables 4.47 and 4.48, (on page 231), support such factors as ‘student satisfaction’ and ‘affective commitment’ in terms of what students think about the concept of Blended pedagogy, in that it offers predominantly vocational and work-based learning. It is also more accessible as it is flexible, allowing for both work and study. The well-developed course content also shows up as a positive influence on students. Finally, Table 4.50, (on page 236), summarises an open-ended question asking students about their aspirations and hoped for outcomes of their courses. In this regard, most students suggest ‘better career opportunities’ and ‘employability’. This relates to the general underlying theme of the literature review, and can also be related to the ‘satisfaction’ theme.

The data findings demonstrate the importance of the themes and how they influence the student recruitment process and the university’s procurement strategy. The general view of most students is that cost, employment opportunities and the Blended mode of delivery are essential components that motivate students when selecting their preferred university.

The next chapter will provide a final synthesis of the findings. However, it will also focus on readdressing the original research questions and attempt to ascertain the extent to which the research findings relate to them. The discussion also attempts to provide some evaluation of the researcher’s contribution to theory and practice. This final chapter aims to inform the academic community about the current and future state of marketisation in a For-Profit provider in order to recommend practical enhancements to senior management within the university. A ’genie has been released from a bottle' by the English policy-makers, however the consequences are probably far more complex than anyone anticipated. This revelation is a main contribution to new knowledge of this PhD thesis.

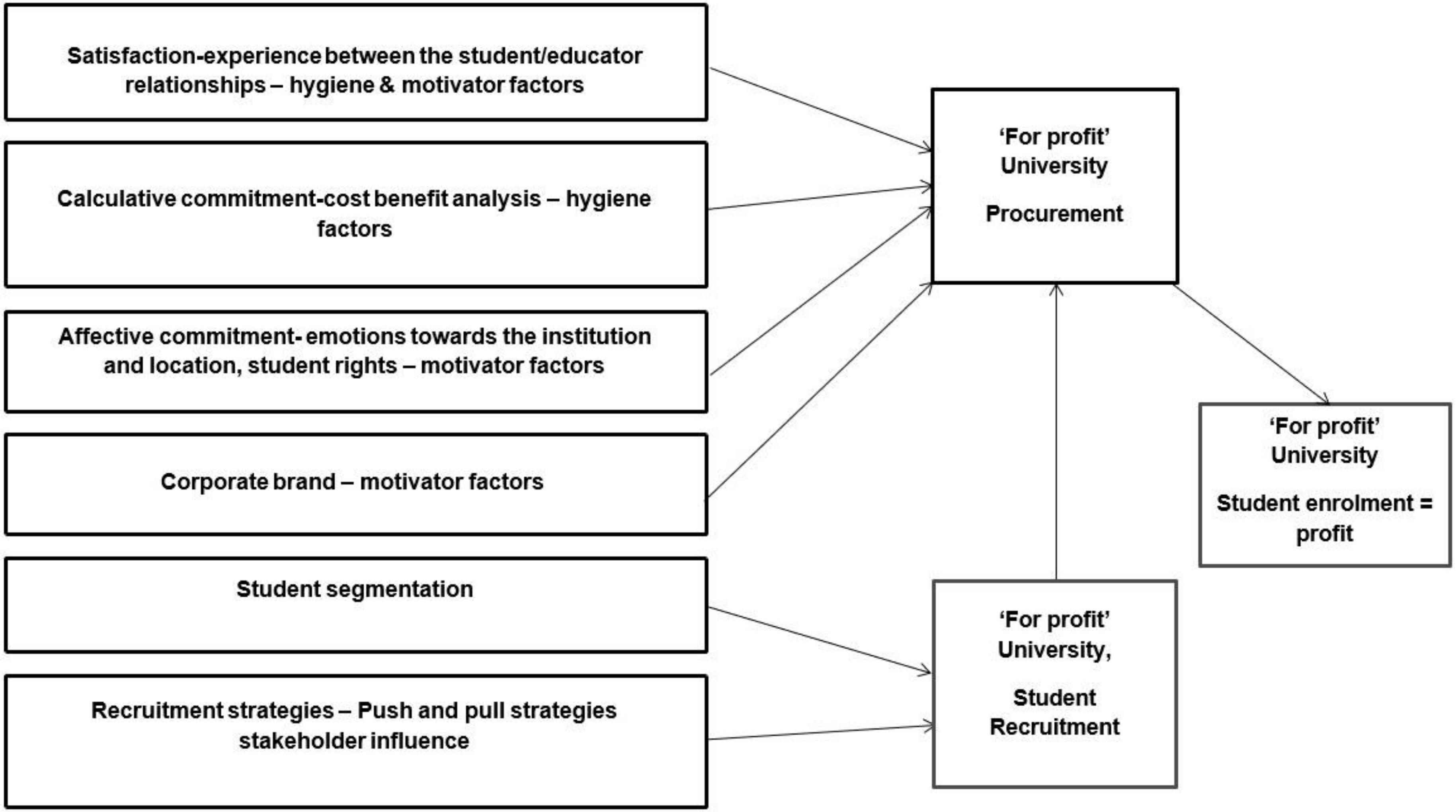

Figure 4.1 Conceptual Framework – summary, Watson (2018)

Conclusions

5.0 Conclusions

The conclusions in section 5.1 below will synthesise the research findings in relation to the original research questions that are outlined in Chapter 1. The aim is to demonstrate that the research has achieved its objectives. Once the original research questions have been discussed, a range of other relevant matters will be set out. In section 5.2 there is an examination of the researcher's contribution to current academic debates in this area of research, together with a reflection on how this study makes an original contribution to knowledge as a PhD thesis. Section 5.3 provides a consideration of practical implications that relate to my research. I go on to make a series of recommendations to senior management in order to enhance the HEP's pedagogic delivery, segmentation strategy, and recruitment strategies. This will include suggestions for the enhancement of marketing communication strategies. Section 5.4 discusses a number of methodological and operational issues that are associated with the research; and section 5.5 considers how my PhD links to broader research agendas. Finally, in addition to the reflection at the end of Chapter 3, section 5.6 will set out a further personal reflection, which will provide comments on the researcher's experience and development.

5.1 Conclusions in relation to the research questions

The following discussion addresses each research question and synthesises the literature from Chapter 2 and the findings from Chapter 4. Turabian (2013) explains the purpose of research questions and advises that researchers should convince audiences that the answers are thorough and, therefore the questions are worth asking in the first place. Tobin and Flynn (2017) argue that research questions must be logical and understandable. The overall aim of this discourse is to attempt to fulfil these purposes, to indicate a number of conclusions that may be derived from the findings, and provide a range of relevant recommendations.

5.1.1 Research question one (RQ1) – How can a 'For Profit' HEP's strategic decisions to expand and diversify its mode of delivery be understood in the contemporary context of the wider HEI sector?

There have been a number of changes in the higher education sector that appear to have prompted the HEP to diversify its mode of delivery. Changes to the student fee structure have provided commercially-driven opportunities for the university to enter the UK sector. The mix of online and offline teaching, (12 hour contact time), has enabled students to be eligible to apply for student funding. As a consequence, this provides for sustainable revenue for the HEP. Participants A and B discuss the profitability of educating distance learners. They indicate the difficulties regarding progression and lack of movement and speed from module to module with such learners. Baxter (2012) posits that this could be due to the feeling of isolation, lack of interaction, and therefore lack of confidence. Hence an alternative pedagogy is required to ensure that students move through the course at a quicker and consequently more profitable pace.

The HEP's response has been to introduce the concept of 'Blended' delivery. Initially, students involved in this form of delivery completed three modules over a 12 week period; however, from October 2018, the mode of delivery changed and students study one module over a six week period. This shift in pedagogic approach meets student expectations. Participant F makes reference to "bite size" or shorter courses, and Coughlan (2018) reports on the Government's intentions to encourage shorter "commuter" degrees. Despite the fact that over a 12 week period, students will now only study two modules instead of three, progression and success rates should improve as students become more focused on a topic. Safford and Stinton (2016) suggest that there are some barriers to Blended learning that must be addressed. Non-traditional students require more guidance on when and how to access the online content. This could apply particularly to the Practical Upskiller and Disengaged Learner segments. These two segments do require additional support to ensure that their learning is a success over each six week period, for example, study skills and assessment surgeries.

The above discussion indicates that the HEP has changed its pedagogy for economic, commercial and logistical reasons. During the interviews it has become apparent that the University has also responded to the demands of the market in terms of providing employability skills and transferrable skills. This approach to pedagogy supports the DfES (2016) suggestion that students should be made aware of the anticipated outcomes from studying. Under the ‘satisfaction’ category from the current survey, employment opportunities and the prospect of earning higher wages score highly when students consider the HEP as a place to study. The results assume that students are satisfied that the university will to some extent, guarantee this. This is in line with the research of Varman, Biswatosh and Per-Skalen (2011), who also find students work more effectively with the prospect of being employable. Interestingly, Participant A discusses the notion of employability and outcomes, and suggests that even if students cannot secure employment once their degree is complete they do not actually blame the institution, as the university has delivered on the promise to educate the students to a degree level.

When discussing the Blended pedagogy with students, 56.7% of them think that the HEP is focusing its courses on vocational and work-based skills. Consequently, 75.6% of students hope that their degree will lead to better job prospects and/or career advancement. The model of delivery online combined with a two day on-campus period has been deemed a success by most students and the interview participants. The term ‘flexibility’ is used regularly during the interviews and in the survey, 43.8% of students consider the Blended learning model to be usefully flexible, therefore, some presumed commonalities between the survey and interview can be drawn. An additional 12.9% are satisfied that they could secure jobs or continue with their current employment whilst completing their courses. Wolf (1988) identifies potential issues with ‘popular’ vocational courses and advocates caution regarding curriculum development and deskilling modules. This is not likely to be what the students will want to happen with this flexible approach to learning. The students’ end goal in most instances is to enhance their employability skills, not lose them. The work of Kavanagh and Drennan (2008) illustrates this within the accounting sector. They reveal that accounting firms are finding graduates who are not equipped with basic accounting skills. The HEP is mindful of this and as a consequence it has developed courses in collaboration with professional bodies, such as the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants.

An advantage for the university is its capacity to transform its delivery of teaching quite quickly due to its established online content and the quality of the materials. The university has responded speedily to the changing demands of the UK higher education market. This has had no detrimental effect on the quality of materials available to students. The Blended delivery is essentially a ‘flipped classroom’. Consequently, the HEP can deliver this pedagogy more effectively as its current well-established distance learning materials are readily available to the Blended students, who prepare in advance for their lessons using these materials. Lee and Park (2018) argue that providing exposure to the e-learning content prior to classroom interactions improves students’ self-learning and goal-setting in contrast to ‘traditional’ learning.

The survey results in this thesis reveal that course content is a ‘satisfier’ and also a source of emotional attachment for students. This view is based on ease of access to studying and the enhancement of skills. Students appear to have also demonstrated some ‘brand’ attachment to the content and deem the HEP’s programmes to be as ‘reputable’ in a quite positive way. When students consider the notion of the Blended learning model further, a theme that becomes evident from the open responses is that the content is ‘well-developed’ both online and offline. 39% of students commented positively in this regard. Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992) and Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion (2009) also find that clear relevance of course content is attractive to students.

In general, changes in the higher education sector have led to fundamental changes within the HEP. From my analysis of the research findings, such changes have so far been positive and have provided the university with commercial and profit-driven opportunities. With respect to the benefits for the students, these changes have produced an innovatively ‘Blended’ educational environment. This has helped them to experience quality higher education combined with built-in flexibility, which has enhanced the students’ potential to contribute to society in an economically beneficial way. It has also helped many to maintain their living standards by providing the opportunity to continue in jobs or to secure employment whilst simultaneously enhancing their education and skills.

Whilst this research has identified the successes of this mixed pedagogical approach, paradoxically the HEP has chosen not to be involved in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) because of its concern about institutional ranking. The purpose of the TEF, according to the Office for Students (2018) is for prospective students to come to understand the quality of teaching, learning, student experience, and educational progression offered by various HEIs. It would appear from the positive findings in this study that the HEP may in fact have ranked adequately in relation to some of these factors, such as quality of teaching/content and student experience. However, the TEF has been criticised. The Times Higher Education (2017) reports that issues exist due to the way in which it assesses HEIs ‘holistically’ and does not delve deeply enough into the individual programmes on offer to help in understanding the complexities of the learning process, quality of the individual degrees, and the make-up of students. French and O’Leary (2017) argue that the definition of the word ‘excellence’ is problematic in terms of comparability amongst HEIs and the experience of those providing feedback. This highlights the complexities of evaluating the HE sector with respect to the quality of teaching and learning and I hope that my PhD thesis makes a contribution in respect of this issue. This PhD reinforces the work of French and O’Leary (2015) by drawing attention to the complex nature of the higher education sector in England. Although the Government is attempting to provide metrics to assess the quality of higher educational teaching, gaps still exist. Consequently, the HEP has decided to remain outside the remit of the TEF.

5.1.2 Research question two (RQ2) – Which factors relating to enrolment do students perceive as important when applying for a course within the ‘For Profit’ HEP?

The factors that are associated with enrolment are ubiquitous. The statements used in the survey are derived from the main themes arising from the literature review. The findings of this thesis tend to confirm a number of very influential factors that students consider when applying to the HEP. There were also some results showing the least influential factors. These will be discussed shortly as some of them could potentially represent opportunities for future recruitment strategies. All four categories: ‘satisfaction’, ‘calculative commitment’, ‘affective commitment’ and ‘corporate brand’ are key contributory factors in the students’ decision making process. The findings reveal that students need to be satisfied both economically and emotionally in order to consider applying to the University. Quite interestingly, although the university is very new, some students seem to trust the brand and the programmes on offer. As Hollensen (2010) explains awareness of a brand can lead to brand equity and value.

Under the ‘satisfaction’ category students tend to be more concerned with knowing that the course content and access to the university and facilities meets their expectations. It is important for students to be able to envisage the end result of their degree as they relate this to employability and becoming more economically viable. The importance of these satisfiers is in line with the work of Bowden (2011), Bolton (1998), Gustafsson, Johnson and Roos (2005), Hennig-Thurau, Gwinnner and Gremler (2002).

Alongside gaining satisfaction from their studies, students appear to be very influenced by ‘cost’ factors. Consequently, all of the statements under the heading of ‘calculative commitment’, scored highly. The cost of the course and the potential access to student finance is important to students, and therefore the HEP needs to promote these clearly and effectively when developing its recruitment campaigns. There appears to be some cost rationality with respect to the student decision-making process relating to enrolment. 78.6% of students perform a cost-benefit analysis on the university fees and charges prior to enrolment and 75.1% of these students think that the courses are value for money. These factors could be associated with the final outcome of the courses and future employment prospects. This high score for performing a cost-benefit analysis seems to contradict the assumptions made by Participant C who claims that students do not think rationally when making their choice of the university. He considers the influence of recruitment agents as being a major factor when assessing this choice. The great emphasis on cost factors when deciding on an institution is confirmed in the work of Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014), Fullerton (2003), Hansen, Sandvik and Selness (2003), Morgan and Hunt (1994), Rauyruen and Miller (2007).

As well as rational and economic reasons for studying at the HEP, student emotional factors are also important aspects of the decision-making process. Corresponding with the work of Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992), 'location' is a very influential choice factor. 93.7% of students respond positively to this statement. This is complemented by students needing to 'feel safe' and have a 'support network' nearby. 'Lifestyle perceptions' and 'ease of access to the content and facilities' are also important to students. Students feel an 'affective commitment' to the university with regards to having their rights of 'participation', 'inclusion', and 'enhancement of skills' upheld. This could be because of their one-to-one experience with admissions advisors, who project effective encouragement to enrol.

Finally, as already mentioned, students to some extent respond positively to the university's 'brand'. Students believe in the good reputation of the university and its programmes. This could be due to the ways in which students receive communications. These include direct contact via the HEP's communications methods, such as email, the website, and admissions course advisors and, indirectly, through bus posters and newspaper articles. During the interviews, Participant B draws attention to the 'tone' of messages sent to potential students, which is 'friendly'. Participants E and F also discuss tone, such as 'soft' email communications designed to nurture prospects during the decision-making stage of recruitment. Barcelos et al. (2017) discuss the notion of tone with regards to social media communications and suggest that it is important when a brand is being communicated. They argue that the tone on social media should be 'human' in order to attract attention and be able to form a close link with the consumer. This concurs with the view of Participant E who explains that social media messages are targeted so as to provide 'stimulation' and 'entertainment' for students, thus helping to form a relationship.

The existing factors that students can relate to and influence their decision-making process are important to maintain, and so the university may decide to take steps to monitor and benchmark these for each cohort. This could be done through the HEP's staff-student liaison committees or through post-induction evaluation.

There are, however, some factors, that students consider to be least important when making their university selection. This could be due to students' limited exposure to these features, or it could be that the factors are inherently less influential. A number of the interview participants draw attention to future recruitment strategies such as 'outreach programmes' aimed at employers and schools/colleges. Students who responded to these statements consider recommendations from employers, (64.2%) and schools/colleges, (55.3%), to be 'least influential'. As there is currently no university strategy on this, it could be that students are not effectively recruited through the targeting of employers and schools. Focusing more resources into these areas, however, might improve recruitment numbers in the future. Evans (2012) emphasises the important role that schools/colleges in particular can play in preparing students for higher education study and guiding them through the application process. It is recommended, therefore, that the HEP gives greater priority to this factor.

With respect to 'affective commitment', as the university expands, emotional attachments to the university may also develop, as more and more students experience first-hand studying on the courses. Those studying at an undergraduate level may become so satisfied emotionally with their learner experience that they choose to remain with the university and study for a postgraduate degree. On-campus clubs and student unions are also likely to develop as the student body flourishes. The findings show that there are some potential applicant groups who consider 'location', 'safety', and 'social networks' as being major features of their decision making process. This is in line with the work of Davies, Preston and Wilson (1992). Offering these groups on-campus clubs may attract them to the university and encourage them to feel more included and accepted; for example, 86.4% of 'Black or Black British – African' students think that 'location' is an important influencing factor in their choice of university. To widen participation and access further, the university could develop on-campus clubs that are of particular interest to this ethnic group. This would be in line with what Evans (2012) finds in his study of African-American students.

A final factor that currently scores quite high, (59.2%) as 'least influential' with students is the influence of university's ranking and reviews. As the institution expands, however, it is likely to become more visible, both online and offline to students in league tables and on review sites, such as The Student Room. Also, once the university decides to enter into the TEF, students will be able to use this medium as a further review site. The Office for Students (2018) suggests that prospective students can use the TEF results to obtain data on student satisfaction of teaching and learning, potential employment outcomes, retention, and assessment. This may be a natural development of the university as its brand and student progression increase. Bodycott (2009) discusses the importance of 'pull' factors in relation to marketing communications, and so good ratings in the future league tables and further exposure on review sites will become useful in 'pulling' students via marketing communication channels.

5.1.3 Research question three (RQ3) – Does segmentation strategy influence the student recruitment process in the 'For Profit' HEP, if so why?

In answer to this question, a simple 'yes' is appropriate. Esposito (2015) conducted an extensive market research project prior to the launch of the Blended delivery. The four main segments chosen by the University to target were the: 'Constrained Career Striver', 'Practical Upskiller', 'Disengaged Learner' and 'Digital Achiever'. Some segments have been recruited more successfully than others and some segments have been more challenging than others.

The Constrained Career Strivers have generally been recruited to Business and Healthcare three year degree and top-up programmes as expected. Recruitment in the Practical Upskiller segment has been hugely successful in terms of students taking up University places. However, this segment, according to some of the interview participants has not been as successful in meeting academic standards. Within this segment the 'quality' of students is challenging for the university. From experience of this segment, Participants B and C discuss the "neediness" of some students; and Participant C assumes that this segment contains students of a much lower ability than had been initially thought. Consequently, the segment has had to have more direct teaching interventions in terms of actual lessons rather than seminar sessions. This appears to be in contrast to the aims of the Blended delivery with regards to students initially reviewing the content online prior to the class seminars. Pienta (2016) argues that lack of engagement with the online materials prior to class is an ongoing issue and frustration for tutors. Participant A regards this as: “quite disappointing”, as his vision is for the taught element to be based on problem solving rather than teaching fundamental academic skills.

The Disengaged Learners have also, been quite a challenge, particularly in respect of their commitment and capabilities. These students readily apply for places; however, once they are in attendance, they require far more nurturing than was previously anticipated. Participant C explains: “The clue is in the name, but I don’t think we fully appreciated how disengaged some of the Disengaged Learners were.” Whilst the university staff and academics may see this segment as challenging, only 2.8% of these students commented on receiving actual tutor support. Thus, they may not see their need for support as being in excess of other students. If this is the case and students in this segment do eventually succeed and progress, then the university is evidently forward thinking in its approach to what Bernstein (2000) terms, the rights of students with regards to ‘acceptance’ and ‘inclusiveness’. In the words of Participant C: “I actually think we are an open access institution.”

The Digital Achievers are few in numbers at present and are largely from the postgraduate market. As only one class of postgraduate students is being taught at present, (which is in Holborn, London), this is a focus area regarding growth at the university when developing its marketing communications.

Two of the interview participants suggest that further research needs to be undertaken to understand more fully the particular characteristics of the four segments in order to know how to secure their interest and attention in relation to particular courses and the university’s facilities. Choudaha et al. (2013) explain that the segmentation approach is necessary in order to formulate strategic student recruitment plans.

Participants, B, C, F and H also suggest two new segments that are of interest to the HEP, these being college leavers, via UCAS, and employers/apprenticeships. Boles (2016) reports that between August 2015 and January 2016, 30,000 people commenced higher apprenticeships, and by 2020, the Government anticipates three million students being enrolled onto these programmes. This market has huge potential for the HEP. Apprenticeships are also considered beneficial to employers as crucial employability skills are taught. Participant A posits the creation of an in-class environment of 'problem-based learning' whereby activities emulate what happens in the workplace with tutors facilitating discussions and debate, thus providing a supportive and engaging environment for students to learn, (Wong and Chiu (2017)). With the apprenticeship students, this idea could be developed further. Ions and Minton (2012) explore the development of work-based learning programmes and how they can help demonstrate the students learning 'in practice' through the collection of evidence, such as report writing and reflection. The apprenticeship programmes can be contextualised within the students' own work-related issues where they may then provide practical solutions for their organisations through their research projects. Ions (2009), also indicates the importance of 'action learning', whereby students can benchmark practices and provide remedies to problems. This approach is similar to the approach Participant A wants to take when courses are developed. Trials for this might be with the HEP's apprenticeship students.

Experience of student recruitment during the last year has enabled the HEP to conduct various thematic reviews of the recruitment process in order to determine which segments are profitable. Participant H explains how he will be undertaking a project in collaboration with the Business Development department of the university to establish and develop outreach programmes in order to attract these new segments.

5.1.4 Research question four (RQ4) – Which recruitment strategies are perceived as most effective when attracting students to a 'For Profit' HEP?

The research findings indicate that there are four significant marketing communications strategies that are perceived to effectively influence student enrolment. These are: the 'website', at 24.3% approval rating; 'social media', at 20.6%; 'recommendations by others', at 18.2%; and 'open days', at 9.5%. Interestingly, Participant A's perceptions of the university website differ to those of the students, he suggests that the website may need to be improved. However, most students appear to be quite satisfied with the website as a means of communication when deciding on enrolment.

Participant E discusses at length the powerful platform that social media provides today. This is supported by Participant B who suggests that the success of the social media tools has been due to the ‘tone’ and ‘content’ of these sites. To reiterate points made in Chapter 4, social media is used by the university to share success stories, fun engagement articles, and reviews. It is not used as an academic knowledge-sharing tool. This ‘upbeat’ approach to social media, which is firmly supported by Barcelos et al. (2017), appears to be successful in attracting students. The social media strategy, at 20.6% student approval rating, is the single most popular after the website.

‘Recommendations by others’, has not only been identified as a perceived effective marketing communication tool within that section of the survey, but also when students consider ‘satisfaction’ and ‘brand’. 18.2% of students think that recommendations are important, and within the recommendations section of the survey, 20.3% of students think that schemes relating to recommendations need to be more conspicuously promoted on the university campuses. Currently, the university does have a scheme for recommendations in place. This, however, has largely been situated on the university’s internal online platform. Therefore, improving visibility and communicating the benefits to students of this scheme may enhance awareness of the HEPs brand in the future. Previous research by Chapelo (2011), Klassen (2002) and Teoh, Tan and Chong (2013) consider the use of online website platforms when providing students with information. They argue that the content should be informative and provide so-called ‘emotional bonds’. There are opportunities for the HEPs internal online website/platform to provide more information on the recommendations scheme and build an emotional bond through a student’s own satisfaction with the university. The HEP has recently employed a new ‘Insight Manager’ in the Marketing Department, and she could prove useful if the initiative is re-launched online. Participant F suggests using student representatives on ‘open days’ as ‘ambassadors’ for the university. Whilst university staff and academics will be utilised to attempt to attract parents, as a student-influencing stakeholder, a student representative might focus on the applicants/prospects themselves. The planned outreach work with schools/colleges and employers should also help to raise the university’s profile and brand image.

Open days, at 9.5% student approval, are also identified as a potentially important method of communication by students, (though not so popular as the previous three). Fischbach (2006) reveals that open days are generally successful in providing students with information. Improvements suggested by those students who took part in Fischbach's (2006) study suggest that further detail is required with respect to administrative processes and course content. The chosen HEP does, in fact, ensure that both administrative and academic staff are present at open days. However, as these become 'busier', their effectiveness will need to be monitored via the ongoing thematic reviews. Interestingly, 9.7% of students think that the 'visibility' of the campuses is limited and therefore potential students are unaware of the sites and the university in general. Participant F emphasises the perceived importance of public awareness of the 'bricks and mortar' campuses in order to attract students to the sites and gain an understanding of the university's environment and facilities. Introducing 'signage' outside of the buildings may also help to create more awareness of the university and hopefully increase footfall at open days. 25.1% of students advocate the erection of such signage to improve exposure of the university.

Naver and Slater (1990), Oliveros et al. (2010) and Ross et al. (2013) all suggest that collaborative inter-departmental approaches within an institution need to be established for student recruitment to be effective. This is relevant also for the HEP. Only 1.9% of students think that the admissions course advisors are effective and only 2.4% recommend focusing on these advisors as a means of communication. However, this is in contrast to the thoughts of the interview participants. This role is considered crucial to the recruitment process by the interview participants. Participant F recommends that the work completed by the Marketing and Admissions teams be collaborative in order to pursue student applications more effectively. Participants E and F discuss the nurturing of potential applicants through the sales 'pipeline' or sales process. 'Soft' emails, such as success stories, should be sent to those who have shown an interest in the university in order to gain their attention. In this regard, Westphal (2000) strongly recommends that success stories and testimonials are not edited and that students' own words are used to convey their experiences to others. And so, as an applicant approaches the HEP, the Marketing team will then hand over the application to the Admissions team to help the applicant complete the admissions process. Each applicant is assigned an individual admissions course advisor to ensure that his/her enrolment procedure is smooth and stress-free.

Chapman (1986) discusses the significance of the 'matriculation' stage of enrolment. At this point, students will either accept their place at the university or decline the offer. If potential students decline at this stage the HEP categorises them according to their reasons for their declination. These categories are: 'expire' and 'marcomms'. Those who fall under 'expire' have accepted a place elsewhere and therefore their record is closed. Those who are classified as 'marcomms' have declined for other reasons, such as, financial or personal difficulties. These applicants are considered still 'active', so their record is transferred back to the Marketing team to re-commence with the 'soft' email route again. Hughes (2018) reports that over the four student in-take periods, October 2016 to October 2017, 36% of applicants who declined their place have been moved back into the sales pipeline for further nurturing. To date no conversion of applicants from the 36% has been recorded. Therefore, future research is recommended in order to assess the effectiveness of such re-engagement with applicants.

5.2 Original contribution to theory

In the discussion which follows the concept of 'theory' is being considered as a system of ideas intended to explain or account for something. What does the term 'originality' actually mean to a research student? According to Corley and Gioia (2011), originality encourages the enhancement and progression of knowledge by linking past ideas with new ideas and examining the practical implications of these links. In general terms, the notion of being 'original' is here posited as producing something at first hand, which is not a copy. It involves being innovative or novel.

A research student is required to demonstrate some contribution to current knowledge. The QAA (2004) define this contribution to current knowledge as the ability of a student, to work with a theory and to critically evaluate differing perspectives in order to draw on one's own ideas and conclusions. The 'nudge' approach, as suggested by Rawnsley (2013), appears to be accepted within the field of academia, whereby theory is moved on slightly, rather than necessarily advancing via revolutionary breakthroughs in thought. Devos and Somerville (2012) argue that although they accept that new knowledge does equate to difference and does have value, they are concerned and sceptical regarding how this difference can lead to the expurgation and elimination of the original theory.

Lee and Baskerville (2012) assert that when researching there are no strictly ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers, and as a consequence, a researcher should make his/her own generalisations based solely on his/her findings. This argument has some bearing on the notion of ‘originality’ in the research, but it also seems to suggest the taking of a particular perspective with respect to the use of ‘theory’. In general terms, the notion of ‘theory’ can be posited as a system of ideas which are intended to provide an explanation of something. A theory sets out a basis for the ‘evidence’ which will support a researcher’s work. With reference to generalisations and transferability if these are based solely on a researcher’s own judgements, then this may produce findings that are over-subjective and thus bring the validity of those findings into question. However, when completing any research, the concept of generalisability or transferability must be accommodated. This concept has the potential to set limitations on a study that is introducing the notion of providing only a ‘glimpse’ in knowledge. Such an assertion relates to Rawnsley’s (2013) aforementioned ‘nudge’ approach, whereby theory is merely moved on slightly. It is this nudge approach which forms the bases of this current thesis.

There are many definitions of ‘original contribution’. Dunleavy (2003) attempts to approach this from the perspective of the research student and acknowledges that this is a concern. The requirements of various institutions can differ. For instance, as Dunleavy (2003) asserts, a number of European Universities remain quiet and non-committal when determining the meaning of contribution, whilst the University of London, for instance, is more precise with respect to research and asks specifically for the ‘discovery of facts’. Originality in these terms may include researching and commenting on work that has not been significantly analysed in the past. A further approach to demonstrating originality can be to transfer theory from one discipline and integrate it into a differing field of specialism. Dunleavy (2003), places an emphasis on theoretical argument and argues that as long as the knowledge is coherent and structured, then value is added to research.

5.2.1 Theoretical implications and contribution of the thesis

According to Cray (2014), a PhD thesis is generally developed from previous academics' work, and a thorough analysis of any new research, (like the current study), may enable a researcher to identify a 'small gap' in which an opportunity may arise to make some additional contribution, however great or small, to original theory. Cray (2014) further suggests that immediate and revolutionary shifts in paradigms are rare. The boundaries of this research study tend to be set in line with the views of Cray (2014). The actual findings and conclusions of the current thesis, therefore, tend towards the 'limited originality' implied in Cray's (2014) views.

The previously mentioned 'conceptual framework' has been a useful tool in directing the research. An 'inductive' approach has been chosen in order to enable some degree of original contribution to theory to take place. The following discussion is an attempt to provide some overall conclusions from the research, and summarise its main theoretical contributions, and provide a number of consequential recommendations.

In general, the research has been aimed at providing an outline analysis of changes to the higher education sector and posits the development of a 'market' in which student tastes, attitudes, and calculations have become an essential influence on a university's development of academic programmes and educational experiences. Higher education institutions in general appear to have responded to some degree to these changes and have acknowledged the consequent increases in the complexities of the higher education market and the process of 'marketisation'. Where institutions tend to struggle, however, is in providing the link between traditional academia, (whereby the institution directs the programme and taught element), and their 'customers'' (or students') specific needs and demands. The view of students as the 'customers' (major stakeholders) within this chosen HEP is evident in the overall findings of the current research, which are in line with the findings of previous researchers, including: Bowden (2011), Conway, MacKay and Yorke (1994), Joseph (1998), Mills (2007), Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion (2009), Morgan and Hunt (1994), Naidoo and Jamieson (2005), Potts (2005), Tomlinson (2017) and Waimer and Vinning (1999).

Due to changes in student fee structures, with institutions being able to charge up to £9250 per annum for courses, the market has become more fiercely competitive, especially with applicants demanding ‘success’ and ‘value’ from their large financial investment. This argument is in line with Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion (2009), who, pragmatically refer to the notion of students as ‘degree seekers’. The current HEP’s fee structure, which is less costly than some institutions, provides an example of good competitive pricing in this regard.

Essentially, this research highlights students’ perceived expectations of better employment opportunities and enhanced career prospects as a consequence of their academic successes. This point confirms the work of Burns (2011), Finn (2012), Grosjean (2004), Guyamera and Burke (2018), Kewell and Beeby (2003) and Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion (2009). Such successful completion of courses is a high aspiration because it not only places pressure on the student to achieve academically, but also on the institution to deliver a viable and relevant higher education. In essence, both educational reform and student expectations have created complexity and to some extent, projected students into a highly competitive ‘marketplace’ in which investment is high but success not guaranteed.

As indicated earlier, the case study HEP has attempted to respond to the needs and demands of this student ‘market’ by delivering a ‘Blended’ pedagogy involving a combination of distance learning with direct on-campus contact two days per week. This has enabled students to continue to work and gain valuable work experience whilst continuing with their education. Bernstein (2000) argues that pedagogy is an extension of both knowledge and practice delivered by those in an appropriate position. In line with Bernstein (2000), the HEP is designing the Blended pedagogy so as to equip students with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. This approach aligns with the students’ expectations of receiving vocational and work-based learning.

The HEP has been rather fortunate with its introduction of the Blended pedagogy, in that its need for additional financial investment has been fairly moderate because the actual educational content is already available from its established distance learning provision. This has significantly overcome the challenges of developing new online courses and content. Consequently, the HEP has been able to focus on the roll out of the Blended delivery. The HEP, however, is still in its infancy and there are various problems; for example, from his experience to date, Participant C has the perception that students do not understand the concept of Blended learning and cannot fully comprehend the need to prepare for lessons online 'in advance' of attending classes designed to confirm the knowledge and understanding previously acquired online. Altemueller and Lindquist (2017) advocate this 'flipped' pedagogical approach to learning, although they do draw caution with regards to students who may require additional learning assistance. Participant C goes further by suggesting that many students consider the Blended pedagogy as an 'accelerated' degree and, consequently, are under the impression that they only need to study two days a week. If in reality this is true, there is, therefore, some work needed, during the student 'on-boarding' stage, to help them to understand the fundamental principles of the model. Interestingly, Coughlan (2018) argues that these 'accelerated' or 'commuter' degrees are effective because students can maintain their employment as they study. Such educational 'flexibility' is an important characteristic of the Blended approach.

Similarly, in addition to some of the student's perceptions of Blended delivery there have been equally-challenged academics who also find the flipped classroom and structure of study difficult to comprehend. Participant C refers to the challenges of this lack of understanding: "There are low levels of engagement. We have some full time people now who have a better understanding of what we want, and the tutors are getting better." Participant F also explains that Admissions have been: "Describing Blended learning as two days a week". Consequently, Participant G has undertaken remedial training with Admissions staff so that they can experience first-hand the learning materials in order to appreciate the student's learning environment online. As a result of this training Participant G states: "They (Admissions) now have a clearer understanding of the work students have to do outside of the class sessions." As Friedman (2013) explains, professional development is important to ensure that skills remain current and relevant to changing needs within the environment. Ongoing training is therefore essential for university staff to enable them to eventually share their expertise and knowledge with students. Bryan and Carpenter (2008) explore aspects of mentoring and refer to the term 'co-constructor'. This is an interesting notion and might usefully be trialled within the university, as suggested by Watson (2018), (refer to Appendix N). Working collaboratively and developing staff in relation to their needs could help to identify essential learning and development opportunities. Kennedy (2005) also advocates the role of mentoring within the ‘transformation process’ of professional development. She suggests that mentoring can take different forms and explains how mentoring can be supportive, but at the same time intellectually challenging.

A further concern has been raised by the interview participants with regards to the alleged calibre of students that the university has recruited. The anticipated quality of the students has not met expectations in some certain segments, such as, the Practical Upskillers and Disengaged Learners. The Constrained Career Strivers and Digital Achievers, however, appear to be fulfilling their anticipated potential. It is essential that the HEP takes action to address the educational gap with respect to the Practical Upskillers and Disengaged Learner segments to ensure that they maintain the motivation to progress and complete the courses.

Fredericks and Salter (1998) and Harris-Walker (2010) stress the importance of addressing issues with what they term ‘risk’ students to ensure that they do not withdraw from courses. As previously mentioned, student expectations and marketisation have brought about a situation that requires higher education institutions to be competitive, deliver quality content and programmes, and prepare employable work-ready individuals. Participants A, B and C advocate ‘motivational’ tools to ensure students’ motivations are sufficiently incentivised to complete their courses, together with ‘resilience’ training to help students cope with their study-work-home life balance.

Participant A asserts: “We become the first university that assuming that someone has passed the academic requirements screens on motivation, I believe that ability is not a forerunner to future success in studies or career. In fact, having limited success in ability and combined with high level motivation creates far more success.” Participant B states: “I would really like to find a way to deliver awareness and self-resilience to students”. Finally, Participant C suggests: “In my simple world, if you can’t be bothered to fill in a form and do an online test how are you going to cope with a Blended learning degree? In a sense some of these motivation tests seem to be right." Bar et al. (2018) put forward the argument for teaching students resilience techniques, not only so that they can cope with the learning environment, but also so that they can operate effectively once in the work environment. Delgado et al. (2017) suggest that equipping students with resilience skills can help them later in the workplace to deal with work related burnout and/or stress.

From this discussion there appears to be a number of benefits to the HEP if the provider was to invest resources into teaching students resilience. Students could be more likely to cope with their courses, and learn the skills that can be transferred to the work environment. All this could lead to enhanced employability skills. Communicating these skills and benefits effectively at the recruitment stage will hopefully attract more students to the University, as it could become to be considered a caring institution, providing good value for money.

A planned intervention designed to expedite students' progress is the shortening of the length of each module to an intensive six week semester rather than 12. Instead of students taking three modules at once over the 12 weeks, they will now cover one module over a six week period. To potential applicants, who already see the Blended model of the HEP being an accelerated degree, the advertising of this mode of study may make the university even more attractive. Participant F also comments on the thinking with respect to what students demand and he mentions 'bite size' courses, which could be applicable within the new initiative already being launched. However, the problem that arises is how will the underperforming segments of the Practical Upskillers and Disengaged Learners cope with these bite sized modules? It is here where the development of the 'motivational' and 'resilience' training becomes essential. Students need to understand not only how to study, but also how to respond to added-time management pressures and how to deal with feedback. Albrecht and Karabenick (2018) provide some reflection on motivation within education, and they focus on attempting to relate what students do and learn in education with what they do, or aim to do in their lives. This view of motivation fits in well with the themes regarding the significance of student motivation from Participants A and C. Course relevance appears to be important to students, and therefore it might be useful at the recruitment stage to provide students with motivational activities whereby they can make a clear connection between their course, academic success, and employability.

From the above discussions, it can be seen that the research findings provide a useful insight into the types of problems that can arise when a 'private' university attempts to make fundamental changes to its educational provision structure, particularly in relation to the introduction of a Blended form of learning.

This thesis also adds to the broad range of theory relating to the 'influencers' that students consider when evaluating their options and choice of university. Significantly, all the factors under 'calculative commitment' appear to be influential in a student's choice of provider. In the current study, this could be a factor which is advantageous to the HEP as the fees charged by the organisation are 35% lower than most other universities. The positive response to performing a cost-benefit analysis indicates its importance to students because of the magnitude of their investment by students in higher education, both economically and emotionally. Participant F understands this and suggests that failure in a degree means a lot of unnecessary debt. Due to the current student-fees structure, higher education requires a substantial financial outlay from students, consequently, they demand good value for their money. Jones and Sasser (1995) and Woo and Fock (2004) make reference to what they call the 'right' and 'wrong' student. It is essential for the HEP to recruit the 'right' students to courses. This is likely to ensure that the HEP is delivering courses that prove to be such value for money. If the 'wrong' student is recruited then this could lead to him/her being financially disadvantaged. Participant C states: "We don't have people lingering, incurring debt and cost to the tax payer." It is essential, therefore, that the HEP's recruitment process is focused and efficient with regards to its selection procedures.

In terms of segmentation strategy, this particular research has included four alternative segments that may make some contribution to current academic theory and debate. These alternative segments are: the 'Constrained Career Striver', 'Practical Upskiller', 'Disengaged Learner' and 'Digital Achiever'. As this research has shown, all come under the 'adult learner' market, though each have unique features. For example, according to Esposito (2015), the Constrained Career

Strivers are those students who are ready for promotion or to change career. The Practical Upskillers, who are largely female students, are mainly in part-time work and are aiming to enhance their professional and personal life. It is suggested that these four segments add a further dimension to effective segmentation strategy within the HEP, and also in the UK higher education market at large within the UK.

The final contribution of this research to current theory is to strongly confirm the value and significance of current marketing communication methods and reaffirm the ‘pulling’ power of ‘recommendations by others’ and ‘word of mouth’. Bruce and Edington (2008) argue that students benefit from hearing recommendations by other students with regards to courses. This not only provides positive feedback for the university, but also creates networks and helps to establish long-term relationships. ‘Stakeholder influence’, in the form of peers, parents, schools/colleges and employers, has an important place in the recruitment of higher education students. Fatmia and Khan (2008) argue that word of mouth recommendations are essential when recruiting students to a university. Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014) also suggest that recommendations by family and friends are contributory factors when a student is seeking information about a potential university to study at. Bodycott (2009) again endorses the value of word of mouth in the use of ‘pull’ marketing communications. However, Hogan, Lemon and Libai, (2003) discuss the dangers which may result from potentially negative impacts of this strategy, particularly with respect to social media platforms. This issue is monitored within the HEP by a dedicated social media team.

In general, the case study findings provide further contributions to theory and academic knowledge in education. These contributions provide some insight into, and confirmation of, a wide range of previous research findings. They epitomise the ‘nudge’ approach to knowledge suggested by Rawnsley (2013). In line with this approach, the research has attempted to move theory on slightly, rather than providing a revolutionary breakthrough. What is interesting about this research is that it has been conducted from within a private for-profit university. There is currently very little research in this area of the higher education sector within the UK. Although the notion of marketisation is present in both traditional and private providers the results from this research provide recommendations in respect of adapting the pedagogical delivery in the future in order to meet the needs of a range of students from diverse backgrounds. I recommend that blended learning continues to be developed as a successful form of pedagogy. If this happens, it may become possible to close the gap that currently exists between the policy makers and their ideologies and the actual practice within the higher education sector. In summary the original contribution from this research and the private for-profit university is not only interesting to those operating within this part of the market, but provides insight for academics functioning in a more traditional non-profit university setting. The contribution the research makes to new knowledge is revealed in the following areas:

-The value of teaching new students motivation and resilience techniques to enable them to cope effectively with the demands of higher education and work commitments in the context of a Blended learning environment.

-The essential requirement for academics and university staff to be kept continuously informed and trained with respect to changes to pedagogic delivery. The complexity of the higher education market and changes in structure regarding the 'flipped classroom' requires a clear focus in order to develop a relatively skilled and expert workforce. It is suggested that this can be largely achieved through continuous professional development and 'co-constructing mentoring' activities.

-The need for a university to ensure that 'right' and 'wrong' students are identified and, in collaboration with the students, that cost benefits analyses are performed. This will enable applicants to ascertain whether their financial commitments are worth the potential economic, social and skills outputs from being awarded a particular degree; in other words, are students' costs and efforts value for money?

- The identification of four alternative segments in the higher education market in the UK; those being the 'Constrained Career Strivers', 'Practical Upskillers', 'Disengaged Learners' and 'Digital Achievers'. The findings of this current study indicate various approaches to engagement with these very different types of student in order to encourage and assist them to succeed in their courses.

-A contribution to the advocacy of 'word of mouth' and 'recommendations by others' approaches to the development of marketing communications strategy in the student recruitment process.

- The importance of taking account of student differences in culture, ethnicity, gender, age, marital status, type of household, and location when attempting to establish a new Blended higher education environment.

- Confirmation that applicants are clearly attracted to the work-study ‘flexibility’ that a Blended student can provide.

-The market advantage occurring to the university’s more competitive students fees structure. This is an important consideration at a time when new regulations are due to be presented before Parliament which will permit universities to raise annual fees to allow them to introduce two-year fast track degrees and consequently, reduce costs for some students, (Bennett, 2018). This measure has been welcomed by the regulatory Office for Students. The initiative should further intensify market competition in the HE sector.

5.3 Practical implications

The research has also revealed a number of practical implications for the HEP managers to consider when developing their pedagogy to attract students to the university, together with ways to enhance current segmentation and recruitment strategies.

In relation to the Blended pedagogy it has been suggested by Participant B that students are taught ‘resilience’ to be able to cope with the learning environment of the Blended approach, that being a combination of online and over two full days. Participants A and C also make reference to motivation. In particular they suggest that motivation testing should take place at the admissions stage. If this does become an activity within the admissions process then it would be useful to align this work to that being undertaken on resilience. Hamdan-Mansour and Hamdan-Mansour (2015), in their overseas study find that 50% of students displayed some resilience techniques, 70% showed signs of depression and 50% of students felt a support network of family and friends was essential. So, whilst the HEP has introduced some work on resilience, much more work needs to be done. ‘Resilience’ and ‘motivation’ are key factors in the enhancement of student progress on HE courses generally.

Participant B asserts that the use of an external consultancy firm to provide the training for students on resilience is the most effective way to deliver this. However, the current researcher recommends a more 'joined-up' approach to the delivery of resilience training that is that the skills could be acquired by being specifically embedded into the students' programmes. For example, there is an opportunity, online for both motivation and resilience to be underpinned within the student induction and study skills area. Students could also be given reflective 'touch points', whereby they essentially self-assess their own performance in terms of motivation and resilience. Jisc (2015) argues that self-reflection and self-assessment give students learning independence and empowers them to take ownership of their development. One way in which the self-assessment could take place might be through the 'My Notebook' section online. This is similar to a personal blog.

With regards to answering Research Question Two, students have provided substantial insights into their potential influencers when considering choice of university and it is recommended that this should now be capitalised on and developed. The Admissions team will be provided with this information in detail in order for them to develop a more thorough understanding of and relationship with potential students. Miller (2016) emphasises the importance of using data in relation to student behaviour which may benefit an institution. This should enable the admissions course advisors to empathise with the students' needs at the recruitment stage. For instance, knowing that students of a particular gender, ethnic or social background want to feel safe and secure will be one important factor to emphasise through the process. Focusing on the benefits of setting out the course content online, together with emphasising the value added from these, may again provide a unique 'selling' point for the university, (and HEIs, generally). The findings from this research based on the variables: 'satisfaction', 'calculative commitment', and 'affective commitment', are supported to some extent through the work of a good number of researchers, including: Bolton (1998), Bowen (2011), Fullerton (2003), Gustafsson, Johnson and Roos (2005), Hennig-Thurau, Gwinnner and Gremler (2002) Harrison-Walker (2001), Hansen, Sandvik and Selness (2003), Hennig-Thurau, Hess and Story (2005) Morgan and Hunt (1994), Rauyruen and Miller (2007) and Yilam (2017). It is, therefore, recommended that these findings might be seriously considered by the chosen HEP's management.

As well as fully utilising the existing HEP's core competencies and capabilities, the HEP's management could also consider formalising 'outreach' programmes to schools/colleges and employers as soon as possible. With respect to schools/colleges in particular, management could consider the role of a range of stakeholders, such as the potentially influential role of parents in students' decision-making processes. The data results revealed in Chapter 4 make reference, and link at times, to the HEP's 'sister' college. Events at and organised trips to the university campuses, arranged by the 'sister' college could prove fruitful when converting these students to the HEP's top-up degrees. The Office for Students (2018) discusses the National Collaborative Outreach Programme which focuses on increasing higher education student numbers from disadvantaged areas and minority groups. Although the HEP does not form part of this partnership it could undertake similar activities and initiatives with regards to targeting schools and colleges.

Although regarded as less significant amongst the current sample of students, the introduction of on-campus clubs might possibly attract more students to the university. Currently the university uses a number of agents to recruit students. Generally the recruitment agents will target specific ethnic and religious groups. Participant B explains that there is strategy for reducing the use of agents by 30% over the next three years together with increasing direct entry by 65%. Consequently, the HEP will need to develop its own strategy with respect to continuing to target these groups. Significantly, Evans (2012) finds that minority groups are more likely to be attracted to on-campus clubs. Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014) also suggest the attractiveness of clubs. Thus, a possible approach to making the university more attractive would be to promote extra-curricular activities, (such as these clubs), to create an image of a 'fun' and 'vibrant' campuses. However, much would depend on the proximity of students' homes from the campuses, family commitments, and student interest in such activities, especially as they will be part-time on-campus, not full-time.

Crucially, the HEP needs to ensure that it can cope with the high uptake of students from the Practical Upskiller and Disengaged Learner segments. Participant C suggests the introduction of motivational and admissions tasks to gauge the capability of these segments. He believes that not all Blended students currently understand the learning model. He suggests that most see Blended learning as an ‘accelerated’ degree. If this is the case regarding these two segments, which are generally at a lower academic ability level or have previously suffered a poor educational experience, then their ‘expectations’ will need to be managed. It is recommended, therefore, that the provision of further training for the admissions advisors will be essential in order to ensure that they are able to enlighten applicants regarding the demands of Blended learning and the expectations of the ‘flipped classroom’. Song and Kapur (2017) discuss the fundamental principles of this pedagogy and posit that expecting these two segments to be able to digest the online material in readiness for intellectual academic debates in-class could be, initially, too much to ask. Having received appropriate training, admissions course advisors would then be able to sift through applications and determine who can gain the maximum positive benefits from Blended learning and those who may require alternative provision elsewhere, such as at the HEP’s ‘sister’ college.

With regards to the provision of more effective marketing communications methods, a number of survey students provided some potentially useful recommendations for improvements. Firstly, the HEP needs to heighten its recommendation scheme in order to recruit more current students as ‘advocates’ of the university. Bock, Poole and Joseph (2014) find that using recommendations contributes positively to the student’s decision-making process and choice of institution. In order to recruit ‘advocates’ the HEP could post adverts around the campuses, or share the scheme effectively during staff-student liaison committees. King, Reed and Stachow (1999) suggest that these committees can be valuable as they instil confidence not only in the overall system, but also in terms of the specific items discussed on the agendas. Secondly, the HEP needs to start to use the students more efficaciously as ambassadors and arrange more open days, during which prospects are taken around the campuses by the student representatives. This approach relates to the research conducted by Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014), who find that great success is achieved from students ‘bragging’ about the institution. These students can then also be recruited to be part of the outreach team that visits school/colleges and/or employers depending, of course, on work and family commitments. There could be a nominal fee attached to this role. Presently student representatives are paid a small fee for their effort and this could be increased proportionately depending on their level of involvement in providing ‘word of mouth’ communications.

Another recommendation is to ensure that the ‘parent’ stakeholder groups are targeted. Although this group was found to be not so important to students as an influencer in this particular research, gaining parents’ trust and support might help to convert some potential students, particularly as the HEP is intending to target college leavers. It is noticeable that parental influence is identified as more significant by other researchers, such as Bunzel (2007), Dodds (2011), Gajic (2010), Jackson, Davis and Damron-Martinez (2014), and Joseph et al. (2012). Hence, the HEP should not neglect this potential source of applicant.

‘Signage’ is essential and so it is recommended that it be placed prominently outside of the campus buildings as a matter of urgency. Hollensen (2010) suggests that such ‘pull’ communication strategies are effective and emphasise a ‘customer-orientated’ approach to advertising, encouraging customers to relate well to a brand. As the HEP’s parent company owns the buildings in which the HEP teaches, it is in the parent company’s best interests to allow such signage to be erected in order to attract more students to the University. The campus in Tower Hill, for instance, is very impressive in this regard and helps students feel they are at the heart of London’s history. Consequently, as the brand grows the brand image will also develop and be more easily identified by students.

5.4 Limitations of the research

As Schon (1983) suggests, ‘reflecting in action’ and ‘reflecting on action’ are important to a reflective practitioner. Both stages of reflection have been utilised in this study and as a consequence, a number of limitations and areas for improvements for future research have been identified.

The first limitation has been the focus on only one case study HEP. Whilst there may have been problems surrounding transferability, as Gill and Johnson (2010) indicate, the focus on this for-profit provider may be considered interesting as it is new to the higher education sector. Therefore, examining the market's response to its entry, plus exploring the HEP's reactions to market forces, has provided fruitful material for the development of this current piece of PhD research. Future research, with respect to extending the use of case studies will be considered in more detail in section 5.5.

In order to reduce some of the problems concerning transferability, the next issue encountered has been the targeting of the whole population of students in the Blended delivery. When choosing this approach, the researcher considered its advantages and disadvantages; an advantage, for instance, is being able to gather sufficient statistically significant data for the analysis. A disadvantage of this census approach, as Zelin (2011) confirms is the difficulty of ensuring that the participants responding to the survey questions are representative and proportionately balanced. In this regard, student responses were monitored through the end of survey questions and compared against the HEPs internal database in relation to ethnicity, age and gender. However, other factors, such as household and marital status are not quite so clear, and therefore it is difficult to be wholly confident that the student population is perfectly and accurately represented. However, there seems to have been sufficient accuracy in the representation to provide a reasonable degree of confidence in the analysis of results.

Administering the survey online has been a further challenge with respect to the response rate. Initially, the response rate was low and it took a lot of encouragement and reminders to get students to complete the survey. Even then the response rate was barely 50%. Lindemman (2016) provides a range of strategies to improve response rates such as showing gratitude, following up and having someone at the other end helping to improve the participants' involvement. Even with these strategies in place, the researcher was somewhat disappointed with the overall 52% response rate.

Once the data was collected, the researcher took time to analyse the responses from the open-ended questions in the survey and I think that they provide relevant and valuable data. The use of focus groups online instead of relying only on the survey to draw more open responses would have complemented this data. Schneider et al. (2002) reflect on the advantages of this approach, including the ability to post comments and ideas online, when ready.

5.5 Future research

Despite the limitations of the current study, a range of general conclusions and recommendations have been made as comprehensively as possible. With respect to future research on the themes discussed, there are a number of ways that might further develop the research and expand the research themes. These are considered below.

Firstly, by narrowing the scope of the research and, in particular, conducting more qualitative lines of enquiry via focus groups, the findings can be developed further. This approach could be focused on some of the end of survey questions, involving groups such as 'ethnicity'. Schneider et al. (2002) advocate the use of focus groups when examining a small number of participants. This approach enables further meaningful insights to be gained in order to make overall sense of a topic. Bryman (2016) supports the use of focus groups for a number of reasons, these include: being able to understand the feelings and attributes of participants. In this way a group can discuss topics that are considered personally important to them. There is also an opportunity for a thorough discussion involving challenges and counter arguments between participants. This may enable the researcher to construct deeper meaning from the collective responses of the participants.

Although, in a number of instances, ethnicity is not deemed statistically significant due to low numbers in the survey, approaching ethnic groups in a less scientific manner and permitting a more conversational and collaborative procedure could be an advantage with respect to understanding more about their views and opinions. For example, conducting focus groups with the 'Black or Black British – African' group would be informative with regard to finding out more about their preference to study near home and being near to a support network. Widening access and participation in higher education is a priority for the Government.

HEFCE (2016) announced its plan to introduce a collaborative ‘outreach’ programme designed to target minority and disadvantaged groups in the hope to encourage them to apply to HEIs. Although HEFCE has now closed, its initiatives still continue through other agencies, such as the Office for Students.

Another recommendation is to conduct more in-depth interviews with students in order to understand their view regarding degrees. These could include: the benefits of degrees, what they lead to, and how they would prefer to see them structured. According to Denscombe (2014), it is important to allow participants to develop their own ideas; and in-depth interviews enable this process to occur. In both theoretical and practical terms this would be useful in relation to the direction of any future pedagogic development and change in the currently developing HEP.

In-depth interviews with the admissions course advisors would also be valuable in order to gain a greater understanding of how they discern their role and the guidance that they give to applicants. It will be useful to gauge their understanding of the factors considered by students when applying for a course, and benchmark these against those factors identified in this research. Pemberton, Stonehouse and Yarrow (2001) stress the importance of benchmarking against set standards in order to improve processes and performance. The concept of benchmarking would enable the HEP to learn and compare what the admissions advisors are relaying to applicants in relation to the four themes considered in this study, that is: ‘satisfaction’, ‘affective commitment’, ‘calculative cost’ and ‘brand’.

It is possible that three activities under Participatory Action Research, (PAR), could prove fruitful to the HEP. Tobin and Flynn (2017) define PAR as collectively gaining an understanding, self-reflection, and taking action in a situation in order to implement change and make improvements. Bernard (2000) stresses the importance for all participants to be involved in the research and be considered as co-owners. She argues, however, that those involved in the research need to be interested in and committed to the topic in order for them to be committed to the study.

The three recommended activities mentioned previously include, firstly, research involving the HEP’s Marketing and Business Development departments in relation to the formation of outreach programmes and future recruitment strategies.

Understanding the dynamics of the collaboration and execution of the programmes, and examining the roles played by the university and students when reaching out to schools/colleges, employers and targeted minority groups will also be interesting and valuable. The findings from this research could lead to practical enhancements, but also add significantly to theory relating to the widening of participation and access in an HEI.

The second recommended PAR could be in relation to working with the Marketing team to analyse further the four existing segments plus two further segments; these latter segments being the ‘UCAS 18+’ market and ‘employer apprenticeships’. This research could inform the university and the wider higher education community about these potentially ‘profitable’ segments and how to target students with respect to particular courses and programmes. As Kotler et al. (2009) suggest, part of the segmentation strategy is to ensure that the segment is large enough to be profitable and sustainable over time.

The final suggested PAR could be in collaboration with the university’s Admissions team. The research could examine two aspects of the recruitment process: firstly, the effectiveness of motivational assessments to the process, their objectives, and subsequent examples of their successes and failings. Secondly, once students are reintroduced into the sales pipeline after they have declined their place, research could be undertaken to re-appraise their motivations with respect to eventually studying at the University (or not). Therefore, this re-introduction initiative could be assessed subsequently in order to determine its usefulness to the university.

All of the three recommendations relating to the PAR approach involve individuals and departments working together. This point has been highlighted as a necessary part of developing effective recruitment processes by Naver and Slater (1990). They focus on the need for ‘unity’ in order to ensure that strategies are developed effectively for the benefit of the students. Such unity is dependent on the quality of leadership from top management.

A further potentially valuable research approach might be to conduct focus groups with Blended academics and academic management, in order to develop better understanding of the complexities of delivering the Blended pedagogy to the various segments. A further analysis and gathering of data on how to embed resilience into the programmes may also be useful to both academics and academic management. McCann et al. (2013) argue that developing resilience techniques is essential for maintaining individuals' personal and professional wellbeing.

Finally, with reference to expanding the scope of the research and developing the case study approach, a comparative study is suggested. Bryman and Bell (2011) define this type of study as one that involves two or more cases being examined. In relation to this particular study it might be interesting and valuable to provide an analysis of this chosen HEP's approach to its pedagogy, segmentation, and recruitment strategies with those institutions from a more 'traditional' setting. The latter settings would be predominantly campus based universities which are beginning to develop an online element of pedagogy. This research may add to the academic debate relating to the various comparative and contrasting reactions to market forces and proactive/reactive responses. Denscombe (2014) suggests that case studies are generally considered a good starting point from which to inform academic debate. Therefore, moving this current research forward by and including more HEIs might be one way to progress in this line of enquiry, and provide useful pointers to improved recruitment processes. For the above action to be taken effectively university staff may need to act with discretion and diplomacy when interacting with potential HE competitors.

5.6 Reflective vignette

My final vignette will be short and less structured than the one written at the end of Chapter 3. No longer do I need to consider coping strategies to deal with the enormity of such a large piece of research. In an odd way I feel somewhat more relaxed with regards to my thesis, even though I am well aware that it has not been assessed and I still need to prepare myself for the viva. However, today I have accomplished my goal of completing this thesis and I am now writing my final reflection.

Over the duration of my research I have had times when I have found the work very challenging. Despite this, I have, in general, enjoyed researching, talking to people and listening to their views and opinions. I think I have learnt a great deal about myself whilst conducting this study. Not only do I think that I have broadened my knowledge in the field of marketisation in the higher education sector, but I have also developed some valuable transferrable skills, such as enhancing my proficiency in reading and communication. I often teach students these skills and yet very rarely take time to review them for myself. My PhD study has enabled me to do this.

Just as in my recommendations for students, I think that I have developed reasonable resilience skills. Grant and Kinman (2012) explain that resilience is a positive cognitive adjustment built on a stressful experience. In this regard, I think I am much stronger when facing difficulties in learning and challenges in research. I can control my frustrations better and motivate myself to move on.

Periodically, time management has certainly tested my will to continue. Completing my PhD and attempting to live a normal life has often been difficult. However, I have overcome this adversity, and this has been largely due to the cognitive behavioural techniques I have learned, and also as a consequence of the support from my network of colleagues, family and friends. Farrell (2017) suggests a number of basic techniques to manage time, these being planning, prioritising, and focusing on activities that contribute to achieving the end goal. These are certainly the techniques I have attempted to adopt whilst completing my research.

I now need to prepare for the final viva. I have downloaded a number of blogs, consulted a number of higher education institutions with regards to viva questions, and read relevant academic texts in readiness for this final oral exam. My mind is filled with thoughts and ideas, which currently don't make sense. Murray (2009), states that this is a perfectly normal feeling and her advice is, 'not to panic'. I need to practice my cognitive techniques further, stop reading 'nightmare' blogs and take time to organise my work. I remember that I once conversed with a Professor from the University of West England on a train and I shared with her my apprehension regarding the viva. Fortunately, she made me see the viva through quite a different lens. She was on her way to Chair a viva at another university and she told me that the first thing she was going to do was to remind everyone in the room that the purpose of the viva was for the student to 'showcase' his work. It was not a trial. I'm hoping she is right, but for now I will plan and prepare, and accept the advice of Usher-Smith et al. (2010) to carefully revise the whole study.

References

Aamodt, P.O. and Kyvik, S. (2005*) Access to higher education in the Nordic countries: in Tapper, T. and Palfreyman, D. (Eds), Understanding Mass Higher Education: Comparative Perspectives on Access,* London: Routledge.

Abrahamson, T (2016) So… an association marketer walks into a higher ed marketing conference…Calamity? Or insight?' Lipman Hearne, Chicargo, Available at: http://www.lipmanhearne.com/so-an-association-marketer-walks-into-a-higher-ed-marketing-conference/ (Accessed 05 January 2017)

Adams, R. (2016) 'Government may give start-up universities degree awarding powers', The Guardian, 16th May.

Adcock, D. (2000) *Marketing Strategies for Competitive Advantage,* Chichester: Wiley.

Albrecht, J. R. and Karabenick, S. A. (2018) 'Relevance for Learning and Motivation in Education', *The Journal of Experimental Education,* 86 (1) pp. 1-10.

Allen, D. Van Scotter, J. and Otondo, R. (2004) 'Recruitment communication media: Impact on prehire outcomes', *Personnel Psychology,* 57 pp. 143-171.

Allen, R. and Shen, J. (1999) 'Some new evidence of the character of competition among higher education institutions', *Economics of Education Review,* 18 pp 465-470.

Allmark, P. (2002) 'The Ethics of Research with Children,' *Nurse Researcher,* 10 pp. 7-19.

Alpert, M.I. (1971) 'Definition of Determinant Attributes: A Comparison of Methods', *Journal of Marketing Research,* 8, pp 184-191.

Altemueller, L. and Lindquist, C. (2017) 'Flipped classroom instruction for inclusive learning', *British Journal of Special Education,* 44 (3) pp. 341-358.

Anderson, E. (2006), 'Retention of Rookies', *in Simpson, O proceedings of the National Conference of Student Retention,* 2006, Dan Diego.

Anderson, E.W. and Mittal, V. (2000) ‘Strengthen the satisfaction-profit chain’, *Journal of Services Marketing,* 3 (2) pp. 107-120.

Andrews, D. Nonnecke, B. and Preece, J. (2003) ‘Conducting Research on the Internet: Online Survey Design, Development and Implementation Guidelines’, *International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction*. 16 (2) pp. 185-210.

Andrews, R (2005) ‘The Place of the Systematic Review in Education Research’ *British Journal of Educational Studies,* 53 (4) pp. 399-416.

Angulo, F. Pergelova, A. and Rialp, J. (2010) ‘A market segmentation approach for higher education based on rational and emotional factors’, *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education,* 20 (1) pp. 1-17.

Apple, M. W. (1995) *Education and Power, Second Edition,* Oxon: Routledge.

Apple, M. W. (2003) *Cultural politics and education,* New York: Teachers College Press.

Arksey, H. and O’Malley, L. (2005) ‘Scoping studies: Towards a methodological framework,’ *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 8 pp. 19-32.

Armstrong, M. (2012) *Handbook of Human Resource Development Practice, Twelfth Edition,* London: Kogan Page

Armstrong, J. and Lumsden, D.B. (1999) ‘Impact of Universities’ Promotional Materials on College Choice’, *Journal of Marketing in Higher Education,* 9 (2) pp. 83-91.

Armstrong, L. (2000) *A New Game in Town: Competitive Higher Education,* South California*:* University of Southern California.

Arnott, M. Bullock, A and Thomas, H (1992) ‘consequences of local management: an assessment by head teachers’. *Paper presented to the ERA Research Network, 12 February.*

Ashwin, P. Abbas, A. and McLean. M. (2013) ‘Representations of a high-quality system of undergraduate education in English higher education policy documents’, *Studies in Higher Education,* 40 (4) pp. 610-623.

Atkins, S. and Murphy K (1994) 'Reflective Practice' *Nursing Standard,* 8 (39) pp. 49-56.

Australian Bureau of Statistics: ABS (2013) Statistical Language - Census and Sample, Available at: http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/a3121120.nsf/home/statistical+language+-+census+and+sample (Accessed 30 June 2017)

Bachmann, D. Elfrink, J. and Vazzana, G. (1996). 'Tracking the progress of e-mail vs. snail-mail'. *Marketing Research,* 8 pp. 31-35.

Bailey, K. (2008) *Methods of Social Research,* 4th Edition, New York: The Free Press.

Baker, S. E. and Edwards, R. (2012) 'How many qualitative interviews is enough? Expert voices and early career reflections on sampling and cases in qualitative research', Available at: http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/2273/4/how_many_interviews.pdf (Accessed 01 April 2017).

Baldwin, G. and James, R. (2000) 'The Market in Australian Higher Education and the Concept of Student as Informed Consumer', *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management,* 22 (2) pp. 139-148

Balevre, P. (2001) 'Professional Nursing Burnout and Irrational Thinking,' *Journal of Nurses in Staff Development,* 17 (5) pp. 264-271.

Bara, M.A. Leurerb, M. K. Warshawskic, S. and Itzhakic, M. (2017) 'The role of personal resilience and personality traits of healthcare students on their attitudes towards interprofessional collaboration', *Nurse Education Today,* 61 pp. 36-42.

Barcelos, R. H. Dantas, D.C. and Senecal, S. (2017) 'Watch your tone: How a brands tone of voice on social medial influences consumer responses', *Journal of Interactive Marketing,* 41 pp. 60-80.

Barefoot, M. (2015) 'People in Perspective: The Competitive Environment in Student Recruitment', *Agril Marketing,* pp 31.

Bandura, A. (1982) 'Self-Efficacy Mechanism in Human Agency,' Amer. Psychologist, 37 pp. 22-147.

Barreiro, P.L and Albandoz, J. P. (2001) 'Population and Sample, Sampling Techniques,' *Management Mathematics for European Schools,* pp 2-18.

Barrett, B (2012) 'Knowledge, pedagogy and society: international perspectives on Basil Bernstein's sociology of education', *International Studies in Sociology of Education,* 22 (1) pp. 73-80.

Bartlett, L. Fredrick, M. Gulbrandsen, T. and Murillo, E. (2002) 'The Marketisation of Education: Public Schools for Private Ends', *Anthropology and Education Quarterly,* 33 (1) pp. 5-29

Bartol, K.M. and Martin, D.C. (1994) *Management, International* 2nd Edition, USA: McGraw-hill.

Bartram, D. (2000) 'Internet Recruitment and Selection: Kissing frogs to find princes', *International Journal of Selection and Assessment,* 8 (4) pp. 261-274.

Bass, M. (2005) 'The issue of permanent residency'. Campus Review, 15 (47) pp 6.

Bates, A. and Godon, R. (2017) 'Tackling knowledge 'like a business'? Re-thinking the modernisation of higher education in Poland,' *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education,* 47 (4) pp. 454-467.

Baxter, J (2012) 'Who am I and What Keeps Me Going? Profiling the Distance Learning Student in Higher Education', *The International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning,* 13 (4) pp. 107-129.

Beaty, E. Gibbs, G. and Morgan, A. (1997) *Learning orientations and study contracts. In The experience of learning edition.* F. Marton, D.J. Hounsell, N.J. Entwistle 2nd Edition, 72-88, Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press.

Beebe, L. H. (2007) 'What can we learn from pilot studies?' *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care* 43 (4) pp 213-218.

Begg, D. Fisher, S. and Dornbush, R. (1991) *Economics,* 3rd Edition, London: McGraw-Hill.

Beggs, J.M. Bantham, J.H. and Taylor, S. (2008) ‘Distinguishing the Factors Influencing College Students’ Choice of Major’, *College Student Journal,* 42 (2) pp. 381-394.

Bendixen, C. and Jacobsen, J.C. (2017), ‘Nullifying quality: the marketisation of higher education,’ *Quality in Education,* 23 (1) pp. 20-34.

Bennett, R. (2018) Universities urged to offer cheaper two-year courses, Available from: https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/universities-urged-to-offer-cheaper-two-year-courses-cnpxzffvr (Accessed 19 November 2018)

Bergmann, M. M. (2008) *Advances in Mixed Research Methods: Theories and Application,* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Berk, K.N. and Carey, P. (2004) *Data Analysis with Microsoft Excel,* Boston: Brooks/Cole.

Bernstein, B. (2000) *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity: Theory, Research, Critique, Revised Edition,* Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield.

Bertelsen, E. (2008) ‘The real transformation: the marketisation of higher education’, *Social Dynamics,* 24 (2) pp. 130-158.

Bhat, A. (2018) Top 10 Likert Scale Examples For Your Next Survey, Available at: https://www.questionpro.com/blog/likert-scale-examples/ (Accessed 13 November 2018)

BIS *(*Department of Business Innovation and Skills*).* (2012) *Guide to BIS 2012-2013,* London: HMSO.

BIS (Department of Business Innovation and Skills). (2016) *Success as a knowledge economy: Teaching excellence, social mobility and student choice,* London: HMSO

Blackman, A. (2006) ‘Graduating Students’ Reponses to Recruitment Adverstisments’, *Journal of Business Communication,* 43 (4) pp 367-389.

Blaikie, N (1993) *Approaches to Social Enquiry,* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bloomsbury Business Library (2007) Brand Recognition Available at: http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=7&sid=7a684c87-d8fd-47e7-9973-ed1b93d5d0fd%40sessionmgr103&hid=122&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmU%3d#AN=26738908&db=bth (Accessed 05 September 2016).

Bloomfled, P. (2011) For-profit universities, Available at: http//www.parliamentary.uk/edm/2010-12/1999, (Accessed 28 June 2016).

Blumenstyk, G. (1999) 'Distance learning at the Open University', *The Chronical of Higher Education,* 45 pp. 46.

Bock, D.E. Poole, S.M. and Joseph, M. (2014) 'Does branding impact student recruitment: critical evaluation', Journal of Marketing for Higher Education, 24 (1) pp. 11-21.

Boddy, D. (2008) *Management: An Introduction, Fourth Edition,* Essex: Pearson Education.

Bodycott, P. (2009) 'Choosing a higher education study abroad destination: What mainland Chinese parent and students rate as important', *Journal of Research in International Education,* 8 pp. 334-373.

Boles, N. (2016) Dramatic increase in the number of higher apprenticeships – new figures released today. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/Government /news/dramatic-increase-in-the-number-of-higher-apprenticeships-new-figures-released-today. (Accessed 10 June 2018).

Bollen, K. A. (1989). *Structural Equations with Latent Variables*, Oxford: John Wiley & Sons.

Bolton R. N. (1998) 'A dynamic model of the duration of the customer's relationship with a continuous service provider: The role of satisfaction,' *Marketing Science,* 7 (1) pp. 45-65.

Booms, B.H. and Bitner, M.J. (1981) *Marketing strategies and organisation structures for service firms in marketing of services*, edition, J,H, Donnnelly and W.R. George, Chicago: American Marketing Association.

Booth, A. and Dixon-Wood, M (nd) How to do a literature review, Available at: http://www.ccsr.ac.uk (Accessed 29 March 2017).

Boronski, T. and Hassan, N. (2015) *Sociology of Education,* London: Sage.

Boubakri, N. and Cosset, J.C. (1998) 'The financial performance of newly privatised firms: evidence from developing countries', *The Journal of Finance,* 53 (3) pp. 113-142.

Bowden, J. (2011) 'Engaging the Student as a Customer: A Relationship Marketing Approach', *Marketing Education Review,* 21 (3) pp. 211-228.

Boyatzis, R. E. (1998) *Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis and Code Development,* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Boyce, C. and Neale, P. (2006)' Conducting In-depth Interviews: A Guide for Designing and Conducting In-Depth Interviews for Evaluation Input,' *Pathfinder International,* pp 3-12.

Branda, J.P. (2003) 'Non-sampling errors in surveys,' Available at: unstats.un.org/.../meetings/egm/Sampling_1203/docs/no_7.pdf (Accessed 30 June 2017).

Brassington, F. and Pettitt, S. (2000) *Principles of Marketing,* 2nd Edition, England: Pearson Education.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) 'Using thematic analysis in psychology', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3 (2) pp. 77-101.

Brechin, A. and Siddell, M. (2000) *'Ways of knowing', In Gomm, R. and Davies, C. (eds) Using evidence in health care*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Breckenridge, J. and Jones, D. (2009) 'Demystifying Theoretical Sampling in Grounded Theory Research,' *Grounder Theory Review,* 8. (2) pp.1.

Brewer, J. and Hunter, A. (2006) *Foundations of Multi-Method Research: Synthesising Styles,* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Brooks, R. Byford, K. and Sela, K. (2016) 'Students' unions, consumerism and the neo-liberal university,' *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 37 (8) pp. 1211-1228.

Brown, R.B. (2006) *Doing Your Dissertation in Business and Management: The Reality of Research and Writing*, London: Sage Publications.

Bruce, G. and Edington, R. (2008) 'Factors Influencing Word-of-Mouth Recommendations by MBA Students: An Examination of School Quality, Educational Outcomes, and Value of the MBA', *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education,* 18 (1) pp 79-101.

Brunzel, D.L. (2007) 'Universities sell their brands', *Journal of Product and Brand Management,* 16 (2) pp. 152-153.

Bryman, A. (1989) *Research Methods and Organisation Studies,* London: Routledge.

Bryman, A. (2016) *Social Research Methods,* 5th Edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A. and Bell, E. (2011) *Business Research Methods,* 3rd Edition, New York: Oxford University Press.

Bryan, H and Burstow, B. (2018) 'Understanding ethics in school-based research', *Professional Development in Education*, 44(1) pp. 107-119.

Bryan, H and Carpenter, C. (2008) 'Mentoring: a practice developed in community?'. *Journal of In-Service Education.* 34(1) pp. 47-59.

Bundy, K. (nd) Developing Agents Contracts, Available at: http://www.nafsa.org/_/File/_/agents-developing.pdf, (Accessed 01 March 2018).

Burgelman, R. A. (1985) 'Managing the new venture division: research findings and implications for strategic management', *Strategic Management Journal,* 6 (1) pp 39-54.

Bush, V. Ferrell, O.C. and Thomas Jr, J.L. (1998) 'Marketing the business school: An exploratory investigation, *Journal of Marketing Education,* 20 (1) pp. 16-23.

BusinessDictionary. (2016) 'BD Business Dictionary' Available at: http://www.businessdictionary.com/ (Accessed 04 October 16).

BusinessDictionary. (2016) Integrated Marketing Communications, Available at: http://theconsumerfactor.com/en/5-stages-consumer-buying-decision-process/ (Accessed 18 October 2016).

Calder, B. J. Phillips, L. W. and Tybout, A. M. (1982) 'The concept of external validity', *Journal of Consumer Research,* 9 pp. 240-244.

Caldwell, M., K. Blackwell and Tulloch. K. (2006). 'Cosmopolitan as a consumer orientation: Replicating and extending prior research', *Qualitative Marketing Research: An International Journal*, 9 (2) pp 126-139.

Campbell, D.T. and Fiske, D.W. (1959). 'Convergent and discriminant validation by the multitrait-multimethod matrix', *Psychological Bulletin*, 56 pp. 81-105.

Carey, P. (2013) 'Student Engagement: Stakeholder Perspectives on Course Representation in University Governance.' *Studies in Higher Education*, 38 (8) pp.1290–1304.

Cannon, H. M., and A. Yaprak (2002). 'Will the real-world citizen please stand up! The many faces of cosmopolitan consumer behaviour,' *Journal of International Marketing*, 10 (4) pp. 30-52.

Cardoso, S. Teresa, C. and Santiago, R. (2011) 'From students to consumers: reflections on the marketisation of Portuguese higher education', *European Journal of Education,* 46 (2) pp. 271-284.

Cassell, C. and Symon, G. (1994) *Qualitative research in work contexts. In C. Cassell, and G. Symon (Eds.), Qualitative methods in organizational research*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Chapleo, C. Duran, M. and Dıaz, A. (2011) 'Do UK universities communicate their brands effectively through their websites?' *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 21 (1) pp. 25 –46.

Chapman, R. G. (1986) 'Toward a theory of college selection: a model of college search and choice behaviour', *Advances in Consumer Research,* 13, pp 246-250.

Chapman, R.G. and Litten, L.H. (1984) ‘A Model of College Search Behaviour: Theory, Propositions and Marketing Implications’, *Faculty of Business, University of Alberta.*

Charmaz, K. (2006) *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis,* London: Sage Publications.

Cherry, K. (2017) What Is a Demand Characteristic? How Demand Characteristics Can Influence the Outcome of Psychology Studies, Available at: https://www.verywell.com/what-is-a-demand-characteristic-2795098 (Accessed 02 July 2017).

Choudaha, R. Chang, L. and Schulmann, P. (2013) ‘Student Segmentation for an Effective International Enrolment Strategy’ Available at: http://wenr.wes.org/2013/09/student-segmentation-for-an-effective-international-enrollment-strategy (Accessed 07 December 16).

Ciarrochi, J.V. and Bailey, A. (2008) *A CBT Practitioner's Guide to ACT: How to Bridge the Gap Between Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy,* Oakland: New Harbinger Publications Inc.

Clark, B.R. (1983) *The Higher Education System: Academic Organisation in Cross-national Perspective,* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Clark, M. Fine, M. B. and Schever, C. (2017) ‘Relationship quality in higher education: the role of social media engagement,’ *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 27 (1) pp. 40-58.

Clarke, S. P. and Cossette, S. (2000) ‘Secondary analysis: Theoretical, methodological and practical considerations,’ *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research*, 32 (3) pp. 109-129.

Clarke, A. and Dawson, R. (1999) *Evaluation Research: An Introduction to Principles, Methods and Practice,* London: Sage Publications.

Cleveland, M., M. Laroche and Papadopoulos, N. (2009) ‘Cosmopolitanism, consumer ethnocentrism, and materialism: An eight-country study of antecedents and outcomes,’ *Journal of International Marketing*, 17 (1) pp. 116-146.

Cober, R.T. Brown, D.J. Levy, P.E. Cober, A.B. and Keeping, L.M. (2003) ‘Organisational websites: Web site content and style as determinants of organisational attraction’, *International Journal of Selection and Assessment,* 11 (2) pp. 158-169.

Collins (2016) Internationalisation Available at: http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/internationalize (Accessed 17 October 2016).

Collins (2016) Massification Available at: http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/massification (Accessed 17 October 2016).

Conway, T. MacKay, S. and Yorke, D. (1994) ‘Strategic planning in higher education: who are the customers?’, *The International Journal of Educational Management,* 8 (6) pp. 29-36.

Cook, T. D. and Campbell, D. T. (1979). *Quasi-Experimentation: Design & Analysis Issues for Field Settings*, Boston: Houghton Muffin Company.

Cook, T.D. and Reichardt, C. S. (1979) *Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Evaluation Research,* California: Sage Publications.

Cooper, H. (1998) *Synthesising Research: Third Edition, A Guide for Literature Reviews,* California: Sage Publications.

Corimer, W. H. and Corimer, L. S. (1979) *Interviewing Strategies for Helpers,* California: Brooks/Cole.

Corley, K. and Dennis, G. (2011) ‘Building theory about theory building: What constitutes a theoretical contribution?’ *Academy of Management Review* 36, (1) pp. 12-32.

Cottone, R. R. (2014) ‘On replacing the ethical principle of autonomy with an ethical principle of accordance’, *Counselling and Values*, 59 pp. 238–248.

Cottone, R. R. (2017) ‘In Defence of Radical Social Constructivism’, *Journal of Counselling*, 95 pp. 645-671.

Coughlan, M. Cronin, P. and Ryan, F. (2007) 'Step-by-step guide to critiquing research. Part 1: quantitative research,' *British Journal of Nursing*,16 (11) pp. 658-663.

Coughlan, S. (2018) Theresa May's university review will not scrap fees, Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-43106736, (Accessed 19 February 2018).

Coyne, I. T. (1997) 'Sampling in Qualitative Research. Purposeful and Theoretical Sampling; Merging or Clear Boundaries?' *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 26 pp. 623-630.

Cray, H. (2014) How to make an original contribution to knowledge, Available at: https://www.universityaffairs.ca/career-advice/career-advice-article/how-to-make-an-original-contribution-to-knowledge/ (Accessed 10 June 2018).

Creswell, J. W. (2003) *Design Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches, Second Edition,* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. and Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research (2nd Ed.)*, Thousand Oak: Sage Publications.

Cronje, J.C. (2009) 'Qualitative assessment across language barriers: An action research study'. *Educational Technology and Society.* 12 (2) pp.69-85

Crosswaite, C. and Curtice, L. (1994) 'Disseminating research results-the challenge of bridging the gap between health research and health action'. *Health Promotion International*, 9. (4) pp. 289-296.

Crow, G. and Maclean, C. (2000) *'Community' in G. Payne (ed.) Social Divisions*, Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Cubillo, J. Sanchez, J. and Cervino, J. (2006) 'International students' decision-making process', *International Journal of Education Management,* 20 (2) pp. 101-115.

Curtis, B. and Curtis, C. (2011) *Social Research: A Practical Introduction,* London: Sage Publications.

Danjuma, I. and Rasli, A. (2012) ‘Imperatives of service innovation and service quality for customer satisfaction: Perspectives on higher education’, *Social and Behavioural Sciences,* 40 pp. 347-353.

Darrup-Boychuck, C. (2015) Working with Agents, Available at: http://www.nafsa.org/findresources/Default.aspx?id=8839, (Accessed 01 March 2018).

Datar, S.M. Garvin, D.A. and Cullen, P.G. (2010) *Rethinking the MBA: business and education at a crossroad,* Boston: Harvard University Press.

Davies, R.B. and Dale, A. (1994) *Introduction’, in Dale, A. and Davies, R.B. (Eds.) Analysing Social and Political Change. A Casebook of Methods,* London: Sage Publications.

Davies, M.A., Preston, D. and Wilson, J.M. (1992) 'Elements of Not-For-Profit Services: a Case of University Student Accommodation', *European Journal of Marketing*, 26 (12) pp. 57-72.

Davies, M. Tikoo, S. Salama, M. and Ding, J. (2016) 'Motives Underlying the Choice of Business Majors: A Multicounty Comparison' *The International Journal of Management Education*, 4 (1) pp. 50–61.

Davis, F. Bagozzi, R.P. and Warshaw, P. (1989) ‘User Acceptance of Computer Technology: A Comparison of Two Theoretical Models’, *Management Science*, 35 (8) pp. 982-1003.

Dean, J.P. and Whyte, W.F. (1958) *How do you know if the informant is telling the truth? In J Bynner and K Stribley (eds) (1978) Social Research: Principles and Procedures*, London: Open University. ;

Delgado, C. Upton, D. Ranse, K. Furness, T. and Foster, K. (2017) ‘Nurses’ resilience and the emotional labour of nursing work: An integrative review of empirical literature’, *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 70 pp.71-88.

Denscombe, M. (1998) *Planning the use of questionnaires: The Good Research Guide,* Buckingham, Oxford: University Press.

Denzin, N. K. (1970) *The Research Act in Sociology,* London: Butterworths.

Denzin, N.K. (1978) *The Research Act, 2nd Edition. Chicago, Aldine,* 3rd Edition, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

De Vaus, D. A. (1996) *Survey in Social Research*, 4th Edition, London: University College Press.

Dexter, L.A. (1970) *Elite and Specialised Interviewing,* Evanston: North-western University.

DfE (Department for Education), (2018) Prime Minister launches major review of post-18 education, Available at: OLG, https://www.gov.uk/Government /news/prime-minister-launches-major-review-of-post-18-education (Accessed 19 February 2018).

DfES, (Department of Education and Skills). (2003) *The Future of Higher Education,* Norwich: HMSO.

DfES. (Department of Education and Skills). (2016) *Educational Excellence Everywhere,* Surrey: The National Archives.

Dibb, S. Simkin, L. Pride, W. and Ferrell, O.C. (2012) *Marketing Concepts and Strategies,* 6th Edition, Hampshire: Cengage Learning.

Dickson, N. (1999) UK Politics: What is the Third Way? Available at: http//new.bbc.co.uk./1/hi/45826.stm (Accessed 27 June 2016)

Dill, D.D. (1997) 'Markets and higher education: An introduction', *Higher Education Policy,* 13 (1) pp. 99-117.

Disclosure and Barring Service. (DBS). (2018) GDPR is here, Available at: https://www.gov.uk/Government /news/gdpr-is-here (Accessed 13 November 2018)

Dodds, A. (2011) 'The British Higher Education Funding Debate: The Perils of 'Talking Economics'.' *London Review of Education* 9 (3) pp. 317–331.

Doherty, M. (1994) 'Probability versus Non-Probability Sampling in Sample Surveys', *The New Zealand Statistics Review*, pp 21-28.

Delorean, P. (2015) Is a PhD worth it? Available at: https://proessaywriter.org/blog/is-a-phd-worth-it/ (Accessed 14 March 18).

Devos, A., and Somerville, M. (2012) 'What constitutes doctoral knowledge?' *Australian Universities Review,* 54 (1) pp. 47-54.

Driscoll, C. and Wicks, D. (1998) 'The customer-driven approach in business education: A possible danger?, *Journal of Education for Business,* 74 (1) pp. 58-61.

Drost, E.A. (2011) 'Validity and Reliability in Social Science Research', *Education Research and Perspectives,* 38 (1) pp. 105-123.

Schultz, D. P. and Schultz, S. E. (2013) *Theories of Personality,* 11th Edition, Boston, Cengage Learning.

Dudovskiy, J. (2016) *The Ultimate Guide to Writing a Dissertation in Business Studies: A Step-by-Step Assistance,* E-books.

Dune, C. (2009) 'The place of the literature review in grounded theory research', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 14 (2) pp. 111-124.

Dunleavy, P. (2003) *Authoring a PhD: How to plan, draft, write & finish a doctoral thesis or dissertation.* Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan.

Ehrenberg, B. and Spikernell, S. (2014) Where can you earn the most money in the UK? Pay in London is much higher than any other part of the country, Available at: http://www.cityam.com/206242/where-can-you-earn-most-uk-pay-london-much-higher-any-other-part-uk (Accessed 2 May 2018).

Ek, A. Malin, I. Jonsson, S. and Malmberg, C. (2013) 'The tension between marketisation and Academisation in higher education', *Studies in Higher Education,* 38 (9) pp. 1305-1318.

Elliott, K. M. and Healy, M. A. (2001) 'Key Factors Influencing Student Satisfaction Related to Recruitment and Retention', *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education,* 10 (4) pp. 1-11.

Ellingson, L. (2009) *An Introduction Engaging Crystallization in Qualitative Research,* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Ellingson, L. (2014) '"The truth must dazzle gradually'': Enriching relationship research using a crystallization framework,' *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 31 (4) pp. 442–450.

Esposito (2015) *Student Segmentation Debrief*, Kent: Esposito Research and Strategy Limited.

Esposito (2016) *Brand Tracking*, Kent: Esposito Research and Strategy Limited.

Evans, S. (2012) 'Institutions of Higher Education Marketing Strategies in Recruiting First Generation African American Students', *Marketing and Public Policy Conference Proceedings.*

Facer, K (2011) *Learning Futures: Education, technology and social change,* Oxon: Routledge.

Farr, M (2003) 'Extending participation in higher education – implications for marketing', *Journal of Targeting, Measurement and Analysis for Marketing,* 11 (4) pp. 314-325.

Farrell, M (2017) 'Time Management', *Journal of Library Administration,* 57 pp. 215-222.

Fatima, J. and Khan, Md. (2008) 'Word of Mouth Influence in Choosing Private Universities in Bangladesh' *Journal of Business and Technology,* 3 (5) pp. 74-83.

Ferrell, O.G. Harrison, D.E. Ferrell, L. and Hair, J.F. (2019) 'Business ethics, corporate social responsibility, and brand attitudes: An exploratory study' *Journal of Business Research,* 95 pp. 491-501.

Flick, U. (2009) *An introduction to Qualitative Research,* Fourth Edition, London: Sage Publications.

Flick, U. (2015) *Introducing Research Methodology, Second Edition,* London: Sage Publications.

Flick, U. Kardorff, E. and Steinke, I. (2004) *A Companion to Qualitative Research,* London: Sage Publications.

Fielding, N. G. (2012) ‘Triangulation and Mixed Methods Designs: Data Integration with New Research Technologies,’ *Journal of Mixed Methods Research,* 6 (2).

Fielding, N.G. and Fielding, J. L. (1986) *Linking Data: Qualitative Research Methods, Series 4,* California: Sage Publications.

Fielding, N. G. and Fielding, J. L. (2000) ‘Resistance and adaptation to criminal identity: using secondary analysis to evaluate classic studies of crime and deviance’, *Sociology,* 34 pp. 671-689.

Figueiredo, S. and Mayo, N. E. (2015) ‘What pilot studies tell us’, *Disability and Rehabilitation,* 37 (18) pp. 1694–1695.

Finn, W. (2015) ‘Private universities: An independent advantage’ Available at: http://www.independent.co.uk/student/into-university/clearing/private-universities-an-independent-advantage-8052821.html (Accessed 07 December 2016).

Fischbach, R. (2006) ‘Assessing the impact of university open house activities’, *College Student Journal,* 40 (1) pp. 227-234.

Fiske, E.B (1979) ‘The Marketing of Colleges, *The Atlantic Monthly,* pp. 93-98.

Forman, D. (2013) The Benefits of Working with Education Agents, Available at: www.nafsa.org/_/File/_/agents-benefits.pdf, (Accessed 01 March 2018).

Foroudia, P. Yub, Q. Guptac, S. and Foroudid, M. M. (2019) ‘Enhancing university brand image and reputation through customer value co-creation behaviour,’ *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 138 pp. 218-227.

Foskett, N.H. and Hemsley-Brown, J.V. (2001) *Choosing Futures: Young people’s decision-making in education, training and careers markets,* London: Routledge.

Fredericks, J. O. and Salter, J. M. (1998) ‘What does your customer really want’, *Quarterly Progress*, pp. 63-68.

French, A. and O’Leary, M. (2017) *Teaching Excellence in Higher Education: Challenges, Changes and the Teaching Excellence Framework (Great Debates in Higher Education),* Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited.

Friedman, A. (2013) ‘Continuing professional development: Lifelong learning of millions’. *Continuing Professional Development.* pp. 1-269.

Frolich, N. and Stensaker, N.F.B. (2010) ‘Student recruitment strategies in higher education: promoting excellence and diversity?’, *International Journal of Educational Management*, 24 (4) pp. 359-370.

Fromm, E. (1976) *To have or to be,* London: Continuum.

Fullerton, G. (2003) ‘When Does Commitment Lead to Loyalty?’, *Journal of Service Research,* 5 (4) pp. 333-344.

Gajic, J. (2010) *Marketing Strategies in Higher Education,* Belgrade: Singidunum University.

Gajic, J. (2012) ‘Importance of Marketing Mix of Higher Education’, *Journal of Applied Sciences,* 9 (1) pp. 29-41.

Galanaki, E. (2002) ‘The decision to recruit online: A descriptive study’, *Career Development International,* 7 (4) pp. 243-251.

Garson, D. G. (2012) Sampling, Available at: www.statisticalassociates.com/sampling.pdf (Accessed 30 June 2017).

Gatfield, T. Barker, M. and Graham, P (1999) ‘Measuring communication impact for university advertising materials’, *Corporate Communications: An International Journal,* 4, (2) pp. 73-79.

Gerring, J. (2007) *Case study research: Principles and Practices,* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Gertner, R. (2011) ‘Nation Brand Personality: Students’ Perceptions of Tourism and Study Abroad Destinations’, *International Review of Business Research Papers,* 7 (6) pp. 115-127.

Gibbs, G. (1988) *Learning by Doing, A Guide to Teaching and Learning Methods* reproduced 2013, Oxford: Oxford Brookes University.

Giddens, A. (2004) *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy,* Maldan: Blackwell Publishing.

Glaser, B. G. and Strauss, A L. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. New York: Aldine.

Gliner, J. Morgan, G. and Leech, N. (2009) *Research Methods in Applied Settings: An integrated approach to design and analysis, Second edition,* New York: Routledge.

Goddard, B. (2012) 'Future Perspectives: Horizon 2025. In David, D. Mackintosh, B. (eds) Making a Difference', *Australian International Education,* pp. 398-414.

Gong, M. and Aadland, D. (2009) 'Interviewer Effects in an Environmental Valuation Telephone Survey', *National Science Foundation,* pp 1-27.

Grant, L. and Kinman, G. (2012) 'Enhancing wellbeing in social work students building resilience in the next generation', *Social Work Education,* 31 (5) pp. 605-621.

Granot, E. Brashear, T. G. and Motta, P. C. (2012) 'A structural guide to in-depth interviewing in business and industrial marketing research', *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing,* 27 (7) pp.547-553.

Grant, R. and Sugarman, J. (2004) 'Ethics in Human Subjects Research: Do Incentives Matter?', *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*, 29 (6) pp. 717–738.

Gray, D.(2014) *Doing Research in the Real World,* London: Sage Publications.

Gray, J. (1997) *Enlightenments Wake,* London: Routledge.

Grbich, C. (2013) *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Introduction, Second Edition,* Los Angeles: Sage Publication.

Green, D. A. and Riddell, W. C. (2009) Understanding Educational Impacts: The Role of Cognitive Skills, Available at: http://eml.berkeley.edu/~cle/laborlunch/riddell.pdf (Accessed 05 July 2017).

Green, R. (2003) 'Markets, management, and 'Reengineering' higher education", *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 585 (1) pp. 196-210.

Gregory, R. (1970) *The intelligent eye,* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Grinyer, A. (2002) 'The Anonymity of Research Participants: Assumptions, Ethics and Practicalities,' S*ocial Research Update,* 36 pp. 1-4.

Grosjean, G. (2004) 'Co-op education: Access to benefits or benefits to access?' *In student affairs: Experiencing Higher Education Edition,* L. Andres, F. Finlay, 144-170, Vancouver, UBC Press.

Gross, M. and Hogler, R. (2005) 'What the shadow knows: exploring the hidden dimensions of the consumer metaphor in management education', *Journal of Management Education,* 29 (3) pp. 3-16.

Gruber, T. R. (1993) 'A Translation Approach to Portable Ontology Specifications', *Knowledge Acquisition*, 5 pp. 199–220.

Guba, E.G. and Lincoln, Y.S. (1981) *Effective Evaluation: Improving the Usefulness of Evaluation Results Through Responsive and Naturalistic Approaches,* San Fransico: Jossey-Bass.

Gummesson, E.(1991) 'Marketing-orientation revisited: The crucial role of the part-time marketer', *European Journal of Marketing,* 2 (2) pp. 60-75.

Gustafsson, A. Johnson, M.D. and Roos, I. (2005) 'The effects of customer satisfaction, relationship commitment dimensions, and triggers on customer retention', *Journal of Marketing,* 69 (4) pp. 210-218.

Gutman, L. M. (2013) The impact of non-cognitive skills on outcomes for young people*,* Available at: https://v1.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/uploads/pdf/Non-cognitive_skills_literature_review_2.pdf (Accessed 05 July 2017).

Gwinner, K.P. and Gremler, D.D. (2000) 'Customer-Employee Rapport in Service Relationships', *Journal of Service Research,* 3 (1) pp. 82-104.

Gyamera, G. O. and Burke, P. J. (2018) 'Neoliberalism and curriculum in higher education: a post-colonial analyses,' *Teaching in Higher Education,* 23 (4) pp. 450-467.

Hakim, C. (2000) *Research Design: Successful designs for social and economic research,* Second Edition*,* Oxon: Routledge.

Halpern-Manners, A. Warren, J.R. and Torche, F.(2014) ‘Panel Conditioning in the General Social Survey,’ *Sociological Methods and Research,* pp 103-124.

Hamdan-Mansour, A. and Hamdan-Mansour, A. H. M. (2015) ‘Correlates and Resilience Among University Students’, *European Psychiatry,* 30 (1) pp. 28-31.

Hansen, H. Sandvik, K. and Selnes, F. (2003) ‘Direct and Indirect Effects of Commitment to a service employee on the Intention to Stay’, *Journal of Service Research*, 5 (4) pp. 356-368.

Harrison-Walker J.L. (2010) ‘Customer prioritisation in higher education: targeting ‘right’ students for long term profitability’, *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education,* 20 (2) pp. 191-208.

Harrell, M. and Bradley, M. (2009) Data Collection Methods Semi-Structured Interviews and Focus Groups, Available at: http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical_reports/2009/RAND_TR718.pdf (Accessed 07 December 2016).

Harris, S. (2005) ‘Rethinking academic identities in neo-liberal times’, *Teaching in Higher Education,* 10 (4) pp. 421-433.

Hatfield, L. and Taylor, R. (1998) ‘Making Business Schools Responsive to Customers: Lessons learned and actions, *Marketing Education Review,* 8(2) pp.1-8.

Hatcher, R. (2003) Business agendas and school education in England. Accessed at: http.www.socialist-teacher.org/dossiers-asp?d=y&id-75. (Accessed 10 June 2016).

Hwang, Y.S. and Choi, Y.K. (2019) ‘Higher education service quality and student satisfaction, institutional image, and behavioral intention’, *Social Behaviour and Personality*, 47 (2) pp. 1-12.

HEFCE (2016) A new approach to widening participation in higher education, Availableat:http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/newsarchive/2016/Name,111712,en.html (Accessed 10 June 2018).

Hemsley-Brown, J. and Oplatka, I. (2006) 'Universities in a competitive global marketplace: A systematic review of the literature on higher education marketing', *International Journal of Public Sector,* 19 (4) pp. 316-338.

Hennig-Thurau, T. Gwinner, K.P. and Gremler, D.D. (2002) 'Understanding relationship marketing outcomes: An integration of relational benefits and relationship quality', *Journal of Service Research,* 4 (3) pp. 230-247.

Hernandez-Diaz, A. Calderon-Abreu, T. Amador-Dumois, M. and Cordova-Claudio, M. (2016) 'Internal marketing and customer- contact employees attitudinal outcomes,' *International Journal of Bank Marketing,* 34 (5) pp. 773-796.

Herzberg, F. Mausner, B. and Snyderman, B. (1993) *The Motivation of Work, New Edition,* Piscataway: Transaction Publishers.

Hesketh, A.J. and Knight, P.T. (1999)' Postgraduates' choice of programme: helping universities to market and postgraduates to choose', *Studies in Higher Education,* 24 (2) pp. 151-163.

Hess, J. and Story, J. (2005) 'Trust based commitment: multidimensional consumer-brand relationships', *Journal of Consumer Marketing,* 22 (6) pp. 313-322.

Heukelom, F. (2009) 'Origin and Interpretation of Internal and External Validity in Economics,' *Nijmegen Center for Economics (NiCE)*, Institute for Management Research, Radboud University Nijmegen, pp 1-23.

HMSO (1989) 'Education Reform Act 1988', *Chapter 40 Vol 1-2*, Reprinted 1989.

Hill, C.W.L. McShane, S.L. (2008) *Principles of management,* New York: McGraw Hill.

Hiu, L. (2001) 'Chinese cultural schema of education: implications for communication between Chinese students and Australian educators', Issues in Educational Research, 15 (1) pp. 17–36.

Hochschild, A.R. (1989) *The Second Shift: Working Parents and the Revolution at Home,* New York: Viking.

Hogan, J. E. Lemon, K. E. and Libai, B (2003) 'What is the true value of a lost customer?', *Journal of Service Research,* 5 (3) pp. 196-208.

Hollensen. S. (2003) *Marketing Management: A Relationship Approach,* Essex: Pearson Education.

Hollensen. S. (2010) *Marketing Management: A Relationship Approach,* 2nd Edition, Essex: Pearson Education.

Holian, R. and Coghlan, D. (2012) 'Ethical Issues and Role Duality in Insider Action Research: Challenges for Action Research Degree Programmes', *Systemic Practice and Action Research,* 26 (5) pp. 399-415.

Homan, R. (1991) *The Ethics of Social Research: Aspects of Modern Sociology,* London: Longman.

Homburg, C. Droll, M. and Totzek, D. (2008) ' Customer prioritisation: Does it pay off and how should it be implemented?' *Journal of Marketing,* 72 (5) pp. 110-130.

Hope, A. (2012) Surviving a PhD – 10 Top Tips…, Available at: https://thesiswhisperer.com/2012/07/16/surviving-a-phd-10-top-tips/ (Accessed 14 March 2018)

Hornville, G. and Jowell, R. (and Associates: Airey, C. Brook, L. Courtney, C.) (1987) *Survey Research Practice,* London: Heinemann.

Hughes, D. (2018) 'Re-introduction strategy to the sales pipeline', For-Profit HEP.

Hundal, B.S. and Grove, S. (2012) 'Consumer Responsiveness towards SMS Advertisements and its Effectiveness in the Present Scenario Source', *Journal of Marketing & Communication*, 7 (3) pp. 1.

Ions, K. (2009) 'Can action learning help motivate learners on higher education (HE) work-based learning programmes?', *Work-based learning futures III conference, Derby, England, April 2009, in D. Young and J. Garnett (eds) Proceedings of Work-based Learning Futures III, 2009, pp.57-68.*

Ions, K. and Minton, A. (2012) 'Can work-based learning programmes help companies to become learning organisations?', *Higher Education, Skills and Work-based Learning Journal* 2(1) pp.22-32.

Ingleby, E. (2015) ‘The house that Jack built: neoliberalism, teaching in higher education and the moral objections’, *Teaching in Higher Education,* 20 (5) pp. 518-529.

Internet Recruiting Report (2006) NAS insight: A demand chain propriety tool Availableat:http://www.interpublic.com/dyn/file_dl.php/24230/26/230/27/1160283601/InternetRecruitingReport06.pdf (Accessed 10 October 2016).

Jackson, K. L. Davis, A. B. and Damron-Martinez, D. (2014) ‘ A Model of a Business School’s Recruitment Efforts’, *Business Education Innovation Journal,* 6 (2) pp. 74-80.

Jarvis, P. (2001) *Universities and Corporate Universities,* London: Kogan Page.

Jebreen, I. (2012) ‘Using Inductive Approach as Research Strategy in Requirements Engineering’, *International Journal of Computer and Information Technology*, 1 (2) pp. 162-173.

Jick, T.D. (1983) *Mixing qualitative and quantitative methods: triangulation in action in J, Van ed, Qualitative Methodology,* California: Sage Publications.

JISC (2015) Student Self-Reflection: Transforming assessment and feedback with technology, Available at: https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/transforming-assessment-and-feedback/self-reflection (Accessed 10 June 2018).

Johnson, B. Onwuegbuzie, A. and Turner, L. (2007) ‘Toward a Definition of Mixed Methods Research’, *Journal of Mixed Methods Research,* 1 (2) pp. 112-133.

Johnson, K. (2016) ‘Introduction to AU’, Validation Document, No. 1, pp 12.

Johnson, R. B. and Christensen, L. (2014). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Johnson-Elie, T. (2015) ‘Institutions Go Beyond Recruitment to Support and Retain International Students’, *Special Report: International Study,* pp. 46-48.

Johnson, M. P (2014) ‘Secondary Data Analysis: A Method of which the Time Has Come,’ *Qualitative and Quantitative Methods,* 3. pp. 619 –626.

Jongbloed, B. (2003) 'Marketisation in Higher Education, Clark's Triangle and the Essential Ingredients of Markets', *Higher Education Quarterly,* 57 (2) pp. 110-135.

Jones, T.O. and Sasser, W.E. (1995) 'Why customers defect', *Harvard Business Review,* November/December, pp. 88-99.

Joseph, M. and Joseph, B. (1998) 'Identifying needs of potential students in tertiary education for strategy development', *Quality Assurance in Education,* 6 (2) pp. 90-96.

Joseph, M. Mullen, E.W. and Spake, D. (2012) 'University branding: Understanding students' choice of an educational institution', *Journal of Brand Management,* 20 (1) pp. 1-12.

Kavanagh, M.H. and Drennan, L. (2008) 'What skills and attributes does an accounting graduate need? Evidence from student perceptions and employer expectations', *Accounting and Finance,* 48 pp. 279-300.

Kelly, G. (1963) *A theory of personality: the psychology of personal constructs.* New York, WW Norton.

Kennedy, A. (2005) 'Models of Continuing Professional Development: a framework for analysis'. *Journal of In-service Education*, 31 (2) pp. 235-250.

Kewell, B. and Beeby, M. (2003) 'Student and lecturer responses to the introduction of computer assisted learning (CAL) in a university business school', *Teaching in Higher Education,* 8 (3) pp. 413-430.

Keystone Academic Solutions, (2017), 'Student Recruitment Agencies', Available at: https://www.keystoneacademic.com/student-recruitment/Student-Recruitment-Agencies (Accessed 01 March 2018).

King, M. Morison, I. Reed, G. and Stachow, G. (1999) 'Student feedback systems in the Business School: a departmental model', *Quality Assurance in Education*, 7(2) pp.90-100.

Kistin, C. and Silverstein, M. (2017) 'Pilot studies: A critical but potentially misused component of interventional research,' *American Medical Association,* 314 (15) pp. 1561-1562.

Kittleson, M. J. (1995) ‘An assessment of the response rate via the postal service and e-mail’, *Health Values*, 18 pp. 27-29.

Klassen, M (2002) ‘Relationship marketing on the internet: the case of top and lower ranked universities and colleges’, *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services,* 9 pp. 81-85.

Kolchina, N. O. and Martino, M. (2016) ‘Marketing Tools for Promoting Innovations in the System of Higher Education,’ *Integracia Obrazovania,* 20 (2) pp 176-187.

Kopvillem, P. (1992) ‘Broken dreams: angry students fault a Newfoundland agency,’ *Expanded Academic,* pp 14.

Kotler, P. (2000) *Marketing Management, The Millennium Edition,* New Jersey: Pearson Education.

Kotler, P. and Fox, K.F.A. (1985) *Strategic Marketing for Educational Institutions,* New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Kotler, P. and Keller, K.L. (2006) *Marketing Management,* 12th Edition, New Jersey: Pearson Education.

Kotler, P. and Keller, K.L. (2009) *A framework for marketing management,* New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Kotler, P., Keller, K. L., Brady, M., Goodman, M. and Hansen, T. (2009). *Marketing Management,* Essex: Prentice Hall.

Kotler, P and Levy, S. (1971) ‘Demarketing, yes, demarketing’, *Harvard Business Review,* 49, pp 74-80.

Knapp, T. R. (1990) ‘Treating Ordinal Scales as Interval Scales: An Attempt To Resolve the Controversy,’ *Nursing Research,* 39 (2) pp. 121-123.

Krug, E.A (1969) *The Shaping of the American High School 1880-1920,* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Kuhn, T.S. (1970) *The structure of scientific revolutions,* 2nd Edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kvale, S. (2007) *Doing Interviews*, London: Sage.

Lai, S. Heeks, R. and Nicholson, B. (2003) 'Uncertainty and Coordination in Global Software Projects: A UK/India-Centred Case Study,' *Institute of Development Policy and Management,* 17. pp. 73-93.

Lancaster, G. A. Dodd, S. and Williamson P. R. (2004) 'Design and analysis of pilot studies: recommendations for good practice,' *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice*, 10 (2) pp. 307–312.

Lancaster, G. and Massingham, L. (2001) *Marketing Management,* Third Edition, Berkshire: McGraw-Hill Publishing.

Lauterborn, R.F. (1990) 'New marketing litany: 4P's passé; C-words take over', *Advertising Age,* Vol 1.

Lawlor, K. Mihaylov, B. Welsh, B. Jarvis, S. and Colver, A. (2006) 'A qualitative study of the physical, social and attitudinal environments influencing the participation of children with cerebral palsy in northeast England,' *Paediatric Rehabilitation*, 9 (3) pp. 219–228.

Leathwood, C (2006) 'Gender equity and the discourse of the independent learner in higher education', *Higher Education,* 52 (4) pp. 611-633.

Lee, A. and Baskerville, R. (2012) 'Conceptualising Generalisability: new Contributions and a Reply' *MIS Quarterly*, 36 (3) pp. 749-761.

Lee, M. K. and Park, B. K. (2018) 'Effects of Flipped Learning Using Online Materials in a Surgical Nursing Practicum: A Pilot Stratified Group-Randomized Trial', *Healthcare Informatics Research,* 24 (1) pp. 69-78.

Lepper, M. R. (1985) 'Microcomputers in Education: Motivational and Social Issues', *Amer. Psychologist*, 40 pp. 1-18.

Levin, A. K. (2006) 'Study Design III: Cross-sectional studies,' *Evidence-Based Dentistry* , 7 pp. 24–25.

Lewis, B. and Varey, R. (2012) *Internal Marketing: Directions for Management: Directions for Management,* London: Routledge.

Lingenfelter, P.E.(2006) The un-funding of public education, Available at: http//www.archive.sheeo.org. (Accessed 30 June 2016).

Llieva, J. Baron, S. and Healey, N. M. (2002). 'Online surveys in marketing research: Pros and cons', *International Journal of Market Research*, 44 (3) pp. 361–367.

Lindemann, N. (2016) 34 Ways to Improve Your Survey, Available at: https://surveyanyplace.com/improve-survey-response-rate/ (Accessed 10 June 2018).

Lines, D. Marcouse, I. and Martin, B. (2004) *The Complete A-Z Business Studies Handbook,* Third Edition, London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Lisle, J. (2011) 'The benefits and challenges of mixed methods and methodologies: Lessons Learnt From Implementing Qualitatively Led Mixed Methods Research Designs in Trinidad and Tobago', *Caribbean Curriculum*, 18 pp. 87-120.

List, D. (2007) Know Your Audience: In-depth interviewing, Available at: http://www.audiencedialogue.net/kya10.html (Accessed 02 July 2017).

Liu, N.R. (2009) 'Decentralisation and marketisation of adult and continuing education: A Chinese case study', International Journal of Educational Development, 29 (3) pp. 212-218.

Lofland, J. and Lofland, L.H. (1984) *Analysing Social Settings,* 2nd Edition, California: Wadsworth.

Lopez, X. (2013) Advantages and disadvantages of secondary data collection nowadays, Available at: https://xaperezsindin.com/2013/12/11/advantages-and-disadvantages-of-secondary-data-collection/ (Accessed 07 December 2016)

Lowrie, A. (2008) 'The relevance of aggression and the aggression of relevance: the rise of the accreditation marketing machine', *International Journal of Educational Management,* 33 (4) pp. 352-364.

Lowrie, A. and Willmott, H. (2009) 'Accreditation sickness in the consumption of business education: the vacuum in the AACSB standard setting', *Management Learning,* 40 (4) pp. 411-420.

Lynch, K (2006) 'Neo-liberalism and marketisation: the implications for higher education', *European Educational Research Journal,* 5 (1) pp. 1-17.

Ma, A.S (2014) 'The Development of International Student Recruitment Policies in Taiwan: A 60 Year Trajectory', *Journal of Studies in International Education,* 18 (2) pp. 120-140.

Machin, D. and Campbell, M. J. 2005 *Design of studies for medical research*, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

Malcolm, D. (2010) What are the costs of study and living? Available at: http://www.nus.org.uk/en/advice/money-a Design of Studies for Medical Research, (Accessed 10 June 2016).

Maringe, F. and Foskett, N.H. (2002) 'Marketing university education: a view from universities in a developing country', *Higher Education Review,* 34 (3) pp 35-51.

Martin, F. (2015) A look into the problem of tunnel vision in business and politics — and how it might be overcome, Available from https://www.ft.com/content/ac89e9cc-4a55-11e5-b558-8a9722977189 (Accessed 05 September 2016).

Martinez, E. and Garcia, A. (2003) 'What is Neoliberalism: A brief definition for activists', *International Encounter for Humanity and against Neoliberalism',* July 27- August 3, 1996, in La Realidad, Chiapas.

Mathers, N. Fox, N. and Hunn, A. (1998) 'Using Interviews in a Research Project,' *Trent Focus for Research and Development in Primary Health Care,* pp 1-34.

Mathers, N. Fox, N. and Hunn, A. (2009) 'Surveys and Questionnaires,' National Institute for Health Research, pp 1-48.

Matthews, B. and Ross, L. (2010) *Research Methods: A practical guide for the social sciences,* Essex: Pearson Education.

Meurer, W. J. Frederiksen, S . M. Majersik, J. J. Lingling, Z. Sandretto, A. and Scott, P. A. (2007) 'Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis Methods: The instinct trail,' *Academic Emergency Medicine,* pp. 1064-1071.

May, T. (1993) *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process,* Berkshire: Open University Press.

May, T. (2011) *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process,* Fourth Edition, Berkshire: Open University Press.

Mays. N. and Pope, C. (1995) 'Qualitative Research: Rigour and qualitative research,' *BMJ,* 301 (109).

Mazzarol, T. (1998) 'Critical success factors for international marketing education', *International Journal of Educational Management,* 12 (4) pp. 163-175.

Mazzarol, T. and Soutar, G. (2002) 'The Push-Pull Factors Influencing International Student Selection of Education Destination', *International Journal of Educational Management,* 16 (2) pp. 82-90.

McBurnie, G. and Ziguras, C. (2007) *Transnational education: Issues and trends in offshore higher education,* Abingdon: Routledge.

McCann, C. M. Beddoe, E. McCormick, K. Huggard, P. Kedge, S. and Adamson, C. (2013) 'Resilience in the health professions: a review of recent literature', *International Journal of Wellbeing,* 3 (1) pp. 60-81.

McCarthy,E.J. (1960) *Basic marketing: A managerial approach*, Homewood: Irwin

McCormick, R. and James, J. (1988) *Curriculum Evaluation in Schools,* London: Croom Helm.

McCracken, G. (1988), *The Long Interview*, Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

McLellan, E. MacQueen, K. and Neidig, J. (2003) 'Beyond the Qualitative Interview: Dta Preparation and Transciption,' *Field Methods,* 15 (1) pp. 63-68.

Meadmore, D. (1998) 'Changing the culture: The governance of the Australian pre-millennial university, *International Studies in Sociology of Education,* 8 (1) pp. 27-45.

Mercer, J. (2007) 'The Challenges of Insider Research in Educational Institutions: Wielding a double-edged sword and resolving delicate dilemmas', *Oxford Review of Education*, 33 (1) pp.1-7.

Mernard, S. (2002) *Longitudinal Research, Second Edition,* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Mertens, D. M. (2003) *Mixed methods and the politics of human research: The transformative-emancipatory perspective. In Tashakkori , A. and Teddlie, C. (Eds.), Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioural Research (pp. 135–164),* California: Sage.

Mertens, D. M. and Hesse-Biber, S. (2012) ‘Triangulation and Mixed Methods Research: Provocative Positions,’ *Journal of Mixed Methods Research,* 11 (3) pp. 291–307.

Michelsen, S. and Aamodt, P.O. (2007) ‘The evaluation of quality reform’,Shuttrapport report, *Research Council of Norway,* Oslo.

Miller, R. (2016) ‘Making sense of 'big data' in admissions: a deeper analysis of student behavior strengthens recruitment strategies’, *University Business,* pp 62.

Miller, T. and Bell, L. (2002) *Consenting to what? Issues of access, gate-keeping and ‘informed’ consent. In M. Mauthner M. J. Jessop and T. Miller eds, Ethics in Qualitative Research,* London: Sage.

Mills, M. (2007) ‘Universities torn between two masters’, *Times Higher,* 14 September.

Mitchell, J.C. (1983) ‘Case and Situation Analysis’, *Sociological Review,* 31 (2) pp. 186-211.

Moen, O. (2015) ‘The Five-step Model – Procurement to Increase Transport Efficiency for an Urban Distribution of Goods’, *Transportation Research Procedia,* 12 pp. 861-873.

Molesworth, M. Nixon, E. and Scullion, R. (2009) ‘Having being and higher education: the marketisation of the university and the transformation of the student into the customer’, *Teaching in Higher Education,* 14 (3) pp. 277-287.

Molesworth, M. Scullion, R. and Nixon, E. (2011) *The Marketisation of Higher Education and the Student as Consumer,* Oxon: Routledge.

Moore, R. (2013) *Basil Bernstein: The thinker in the field,* New York: Routledge.

Monaghan, A. and Weale S. (2017) UK student loan debt soars to more than £100bn, Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/money/2017/jun/15/uk-student-loan-debt-soars-to-more-than-100bn (Accessed 2 May 2018).

Morgan, R. and Hunt, S. (1994) 'The Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing', *Journal of Marketing,* 58 (3) pp. 20-38.

Morris, L.V. (2008) 'Education at a Crossroads: Intrinsic Motivation or Extrinsic Rewards', *Innovation Higher Education,* 33 pp. 1-3.

Morrish, S.C. Lee, and Christina, L (2011) 'Country of origin as a source of sustainable competitive advantage: the case for international higher education institutions in New Zealand', *Journal of Strategic Marketing,* 19 (6) pp. 517-529.

Morse, J. (2000) 'Determining Sample Size,' *Qualitative Health Research,* 10 (1) pp. 3-5.

Mortimer, K. (1997) 'Recruiting overseas undergraduate students: are their information requirements being satisfied?' *Higher Education Quarterly,* 51 (3) pp. 225-238.

Mulya. T. W (2019) 'Contesting the neoliberalisation of higher education through student–faculty partnership', *International Journal for Academic Development*, 24 (1) pp.86-90.

Mumford, S. (2012) *Metaphysics: a very short introduction,* Oxford, OUP.

Murphy, H. A. and Hildebrandt, H. W. (1984) *Effective Business Communications,* US: McGraw-Hill.

Murphy, L. (2018) Student recruitment made easy since 2002, Available at: https://www.keystoneacademic.com/img/element_db/67/67699_MediaKit_2018-Web.pdf (Accessed 01 March 2018).

Murray, R (2009) *How to survive your viva,* 2nd Edition, England: McGraw Hill.

Naidoo, R. and Jamieson, L. (2005) 'Empowering participants or corroding learning? Towards a research agenda on the impact of student consumerism in higher education', *Journal of Education Policy,* 20 (3) pp. 267-281.

Natale, S. and Doran, C. (2012) ‘Marketisation of Education: An Ethical Dilemma’, *Journal of Business Ethics,* 105 pp. 187-196.

National Archives. (2015) Consumer Rights Act 2015, Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/15/contents/enacted (Accessed05 January 2017)

Narver, J.C. and Slater, S.F. (1990) ‘The effect of a market orientation on a business profitability’, *Journal of Marketing,* 54 (4) pp. 20-35.

Newman, B.I. (1999) *The Mass Marketing of Politics,* California: Sage Publications.

Newman, S. and Jahdi, K. (2009) ‘Marketisation of education: marketing, rhetoric and reality’, *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* 33 (1) pp. 1-11.

Newton, N. (2010) ‘The use of semi-structured interviews,’ *Exploring Qualitative Methods,* pp 1-11.

Ng, I. and Forbes, J. (2009) ‘Education as service: The understanding of university experience through service logic’, *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education,* 19 (1) pp. 38-64.

Nicholls, J. Harris, J. Morgan, E, Clarke, K. and Sims, D. (1995) ‘Marketing Higher Education: the MBA experience’, *The International Journal of Educational Management,* 9 (2) pp. 31-38.

Nixon, E. Scullion, R. and Hearn, R. (2018) ‘Her majesty the student: marketised higher education and the narcissistic (dis)satisfactions of the student-consumer,’ *Studies in Higher Education,* 43 (6) pp. 927-943.

Noel-Levitz (2006) ‘Student Satisfaction Inventory Institutional Priorities Survey Gap Analysis’, *The University of Scranton, Planning, Assessment and Research Office,* pp 1-12.

Norris, N. (1997) ‘Error, bias and validity in qualitative research,’ *Educational Action Research,* 5 (1) pp. 172-176.

O’Dwyer, L. M. and Bernauer, J. A. (2014) *Quantitative Research for Qualitative Researchers,* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Office for Students (2018) National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP). Available at: https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/national-collaborative-outreach-programme-ncop/how-ncop-works/ (Accessed 10 June 2018).

Office for Students (2018) What is TEF? Available at: https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/teaching/what-is-the-tef/ (Accessed 04 October 2018).

Oliveros, M.E.G. Halliday, S.V. Botero Posada, M.M. and Bachmann, R. (2010) 'Contradictions and power play in service encounters: An activity theory approach', *Cadernos EBA-PE,* 8 (2) pp. 354-369.

Onderwijsraad (2001) *The market manager? An Exploration of market forces in education,* The Hague, Onderwijsraad.

Open Government Licence, OGL. (nd) Data Protection Act 1998, Available at: https://www.gov.uk/data-protection/the-data-protection-act (Accessed 05 July 2017).

Open Government Licence, OGL. (2015) Equality Act 2010 Guidance, Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance (Accessed 05 July 2017).

Open Government Licence, OGL. (nd) Workplace Bullying and Harassment, Available at: https://www.gov.uk/workplace-bullying-and-harassment (Accessed 05 July 2017).

Oplatka, I (2002) 'Implicit contradictions in public messages of low stratified HE institutions: the case of Israeli teacher training colleges', *The International Journal of Educational Management,* 16 (5) pp. 248-256.

Oxford Dictionary (2016) Loyalty, Available at: https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/loyalty (Accessed 04 September 2016).

Oxford Dictionary (2016) Recruiting, Available at: http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/recruitment?q=+recruitment (Accessed 12 July 2016).

Oxford Dictionary of Business (2002) *Oxford Dictionary of Business,* 3rd Edition, New York: Oxford University Press.

Padgett, D.K. (1998) *Qualitative Methods in Social Work Research: Challenges and Rewards,* California: Sage Publications.

Palattella, J. (1998) ‘The British are coming, the British are coming’, *University Business,* 1 (3) pp. 24.

Pannucci, C. and Wilkins, E. G. (2010) ‘Identifying and Avoiding Bias in Research,’ *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery,* 126 (2) pp. 619-625.

Pappano, L. (2012) The Year of the MOOC, Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/04/education/edlife/massive-open-online-courses-are-multiplying-at-a-rapid-pace.html (Accessed 08 December 2016).

Pattakos, A. (2004) ‘The search for meaning in Government service’, *Public Administration Review,* 64 (1) pp. 106-112.

Patton, M, Q. (1987) *How to use qualitative methods in evaluation,* California: Sage Publications.

Patton, M. Q. (1990) *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods,* 2nd Edition, California: Sage Publications.

Patton, M.Q. (2002) *Qualitative research and evaluation methods,* USA: Sage Publications.

Peels, R. (2010) ‘What is ignorance?’ *Philosophia*, 38 (1) pp. 57-67.

Pemberton, J. D. Stonehouse, G. H. and Yarrow, D. J. (2001) ‘Benchmarking and the role of organisational learning in developing competitive advantage’, *Knowledge and Process Management,* 8 (2) pp. 123-135.

Peruta, A. and Shields, B. (2018) ‘Marketing your university on social media content analysis of Facebook post types and formats,’ *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education,* pp 1-17.

Pettigrew, A. (1990) ‘Longitudinal Field Research on Change: Theory and Practice’, *Organisation Science,* 1 (3) pp. 267-292.

Pienta, N. J. (2016) ‘A “Flipped Classroom” Reality Check’, *Journal of Chemical Education,’* 93 (1) pp. 1-2.

Pillay, G. (2004) *The transition from high school to post high school life. In student affairs: Experiencing Higher Education Edition,* L. Andres, F. Finlay, 217-243, Vancouver, UBC Press.

Pimpa, N. (2003) ‘The influence of family on Thai students’ choices of international education’, *The International Journal of Educational Management,* 17 (5) pp. 211-219.

Pimpa, N. (2003) ‘The Influence of Peers and Student Recruitment Agencies on Thai Students' Choices of International Education,’ *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 7 (2) pp. 178-192.

Porta M. (2014). *A dictionary of epidemiology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Potts, M. (2005) ‘The consumerist subversion of education’, *Academic questions,* 18 (3) pp. 54-64.

Power, D. (2017) What are basic planning skills? Available at: http://planningskills.com/askdan/4.php (Accessed 05 July 2017).

Proulx, J. (2008) ‘Some differences between Maturana and Varela’s Theory of Cognition and Constructivism’, An International Journal of Complexity and Education, 5 (1) pp. 11-26.

Punch, K. (2014) *Introduction to Social Research: Qualitative and Qualitative Approaches,* Third Edition, London: Sage Publications.

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2004) *Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education. Section 1:Postgraduate research programmes*, Mansfield, England: Linney Direct.

Quigley, C. Bingham, F. Murray, K. and Notarantonio, E. (1999) ‘The Effect of Price in the College Selection Decision Process’, *The Journal of Marketing Management,* 9 (3) pp. 19-48.

Rajendran, N. S. (2001) ‘Dealing with Biases in Qualitative Research: A Balancing Act for Researchers,’ *Qualitative Research Convention, 2001: Navigating Challenges,* pp 1-15.

Rajulton, F. (2001) ‘The Fundamentals of Longitudinal Research: An Overview,’ *Special Issues on Longitudinal Methodology, Canadian studies in population,* 28 (2) pp. 169-185.

Ramachandran, N. (2010) ‘Marketing framework in higher education: Addressing aspirations of students beyond conventional tenets of selling products’, *International Journal of Educational Management,* 24 (6) pp. 544 – 556.

Randall, G. (1996) *Principles of Marketing,* New York: Routledge.

Randle, K. and Brady, K. (1997) ‘Managerialism and professionalism in the Cinderella service’, *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 49 (1) pp.121-139.

Rauyruen, P. and Miller, K. (2007) ‘Relationship Quality as a Predictor of B2B Customer Loyalty’, *Journal of Business Research,* 60 (1) pp. 21-31.

Rawnsley, A (2013) *Initial Research Training,* Graduate Research School, [Teesside University, 20 January 2013].

Redding, P (2005)’ The evolving interpretations of customers in higher education: Empowering the elusive’, *International Journal of Consumer Studies,* 29 (5) pp. 409-417.

Reichheld, F.F. (1996) *The Loyalty Effect,* Boston: Harvard Business School.

Rhoades, G. and Marginson, S. (2002) ‘Beyond national states, markets, and systems of higher education: A glonacal agency heuristic’, *Higher Education,* 43 pp 281-309.

Richards, L. (2015) *Handling Qualitative Data: A Practical Guide,* Third Edition, London: Sage Publications.

Richardson, S. Nwankwo, S. and Richardson, B. (1995) ‘Strategic issues for higher education strategies in the UK: A political contingency perspective’, *International Journal of Public Sector Management,* 8 (6) pp. 7-16.

Rindfleish, J.M. (2003) ‘Segment Profiling: reducing strategic risk in higher education management’, *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management,* 25 (2) pp. 147-159.

Roberts, L. Riyadhi, L. Garfield, R. Khudhairi, J. and Burham, G. (2004) ‘Mortality before and after the invasion of Iraq: cluster sample survey,’ *Lancet,* pp 1-8.

Robertson, S. (2000) *A class act: Changing teachers’ work, the state, and globalization,* New York: Falmer Press.

Robson, C. (2002) *Real World Research,* Oxford: Blackwell.

Robson, C. (2011) *Real World Research: A Resource for Users of Social Research Methods in Applied Settings, Third Edition,* Chichester: John Willey & Sons.

Rogers, E. M. (2004). ‘A prospective and retrospective look at the diffusion model’. *Journal of Health Communication*, 9 (9) pp. 13-19.

Rooney, P. (2005). Researching from the inside - does it compromise validity? Available at: http://level3.dit.ie/html/issue3/rooney/rooney.pdf (Accessed 28 June 2019)

Rosenthal, R. and Rosnow, R. (2008) *Essentials of Behavioural Research: Methods and Data Analysis,* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Ross, M. Grace, D. and Shao, W. (2013) ‘Come on higher ed…get with the programme! A study of market orientation in international student recruitment’, *Educational Review,* 65 (2) pp. 219-240.

Ross, T. (2014) Six in 10 students will have their debts written off, Available at: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/10747315/Six-in-10-students-will-have-their-debts-written-off.html (Accessed 2 May 2018).

Rugg, G. and Petre, M (2007) *A Gentle Guide to Research Methods,* New York: Oxford University Press.

Ruspini, E. (2000) ‘Longitudinal Research in the Social Sciences,’ *Social Research Update,* (20).

Safford, K. and Stinton, J. (2016) 'Barriers to blended digital distance vocational learning for non-traditional students', *British Journal of Educational Technology,* 47 (1) pp. 135-150.

Salkind, N.J. (2010) 'Multiple Treatment Interference', *Encyclopaedia of Research Design,* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Sarantakos, S. (2013) *Social Research,* 4th Edition, London: Palgrave MacMillan.

Sauer, P. and O'Donnell, J. (2006) 'The Impact of New Major Offerings on Student Retention', *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education,* 16 (2).

Saunders, M. Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2000) *Research Methods for Business,* Second Edition, Essex: Pearson Education.

Saunders, M. Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2009) *Research Methods for Business,* Fifth Edition, Essex: Pearson Education.

Schneider, S. J. Kerwin, J. Frechtling, J. and Vivari, B. A. (2003) 'Characteristics of the discussion in online and face-to-face focus groups', *Social Science Computer Review,* 20 (30) pp. 133-144.

Schofer, E. and Meyer, J.W. (2005) 'The worldwide expansion of higher education in the twentieth century', *American Sociological Review,* 70, pp. 898-920.

Scholten, A.Z. (2017) Sampling Concepts, Available at: https://www.coursera.org/learn/quantitative-methods/lecture/8ALlZ/5-02-sampling-concepts, (Accessed 28 June 2017).

Schon, D.A. (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action,* USA: Basic Books.

Scott, P. (2012) It's 20 years since polytechnics became universities – and there's no going back, Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/education/2012/sep/03/polytechnics-became-universities-1992-differentiation, (Accessed 27 June 2016).

Seawright, J. and Gerring, J. (2008) 'Case selection techniques in case study research: A menu of qualitative and quantitative options', *Political Research Quarterly,* 61 (2) pp. 294-308.

Shagoury, R. (2011) ‘Crystallization:Teacher Researchers Making Room for Creative Leaps in Data Analysis,’ *Learning Landscapes,* 4 (2) pp. 297-306.

Sharrock, G. (2000), “Why students are not (just) customers (and other reflections on life after George)”, *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 22 (2) pp. 149-64.

Sheth, J.N. and Gardner, D.M. (1988) *Marketing theory: evolution and evaluation,* New York: Wiley.

Shockley, P.R. (2007) Thomas Reid theory of perception, Available at: http//:pk.b5z.net/i/u/2167316/i/Thomas_Reid_s_Theory_of_Perception_web.pdf (Accessed 12 September 2016).

Singh, P. and Finn, D. (2003) ‘The effects of information technology on recruitment’, *Journal of Labour Research,* 24 (3) pp. 395-408.

Slaughter, S. and Rhoades, G. (2004) *Academic Capitalism and the New Economy,* Maryland: The John Hopkins University Press.

Smith, B (2003) ‘Ontology’, *Preprint version of chapter “Ontology”, in L. Floridi (ed.), Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Computing and Information*, Oxford, Blackwell, pp 155–166.

Smith, R. (1995) *Essential Elements of Marketing: A modular series,* London: DP Publications.

Smith, P. R. and Zook, Z. (2011) *Marketing Communications : Integrating Offline and Online with Social Media,* 5th Edition, London: Kogan Page Ltd.

Somekh, B. and Lewin, C. (2011) *Theory and Methods in Social Research, Second Edition,* London: Sage Publications.

Song, Y. and Kapur, M. (2017) ‘Productive failure or traditional flipped classroom,’ *Journal of Educational Technology & Society.* 20 (1) pp. 292-305.

Spiro, L.M. (1978) *The Uses of Student Market Segmentation Techniques in College Recruitment. AIR Forum Paper 1978,* Association for Institutional Research Forum 18th, Houston, Texas, May 21-25, 1978.

Srikatanyoo, N. and Gnoth, J. (2002) 'Country image and international tertiary education', *Journal of Brand Management,* 10 (2) pp. 139-147.

Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1998) *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory,* 2nd ed., Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Stewart, K.L (1991) 'Applying a marketing orientation to a higher education setting', *Journal of Professional Services Marketing,* 7 (2) pp. 117-124.

Storkerson, P. (2009) 'Experiential Knowledge, Knowing and Thinking', *Experiential Knowledge, Knowing and Thinking,* pp 1-18.

Strauss, A. L. and Corbin, J. (1998) *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory,* 2nd ed., London: Sage Publications.

Swain, H. (2011) What are universities for?, Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/education/2011/oct/10/higher-education-purpose, (Accessed 01 July 2016).

Sylva, H. and Mol, S.T. (2009) 'E-Recruitment: A study into applicant perception of an online application system', *International Journal of Assessment and Selection,* 17 (3) pp. 311-323.

Taylor, M. and Sandeman, G. (2016) Graduate sues Oxford University for £1m over his failure to get a first, Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/dec/04/graduate-sues-oxford-university-1m-failure-first-faiz-siddiqui , (Accessed 06 March 2019).

Teddlie, C. and Tashakkori, A. (2009) *Foundations of mixed methods research: Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches in the social and behavioural sciences*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Teddie, C. and Yu, Fen. (2008) 'Mixed Methods Sampling: A typology with examples,' *Journal of Mixed Methods Research,* 1 (1) pp. 12-35.

Teijlingen, E. R. and Hundely, V. (2001) 'The importance of pilot studies,' *Social Research Update,* 1 (35) pp. 1-4.

Tellis, W. M. (1997) ‘Introduction to Case Study’, *The Qualitative Report*, 3 (2).

Teoh, W. M. Tan, S. and Chong, S.C. (2013) ‘Factors Influencing Perceptions of University Students Towards Internet Recruitment’, *Asian Academy of Management Journal*, 18 (1) pp. 123-142.

Terasaki, S. (2016) ‘Cosmopolitan Consumers: Research overview and research opportunities’, *Journal of International Business Research,* 15 (1) pp. 32-45.

The British Psychological Society (2010) Code of Human Research Ethics, Available at:http://www.bps.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/code_of_human_research_ethics.pdf (Accessed 07 December 2016).

The Complete University Guide. (2016) University Subject Tables 2017: Mechanical Engineering, Available at: http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/leaguetables/rankings/?s=Mechanical+Engineering (Accessed 05 September 2016).

The Complete University Guide. (2016) University Subject Tables 2017: Medicine Available at: http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/league-tables/rankings?s=Medicine (Accessed 05 September 2016).

The For-Profit HEP (2016) *10 Golden Questions: Learners Segmentation Algorithm questions*, Coventry: For-Profit HEI.

The For-Profit HEP (2016) Our Story, Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-pRxkXdil9k (Accessed 22 May 2018).

The Guardian (2017) Should university students use Wikipedia? Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/education/2013/may/13/should-university-students-use-wikipedia (Accessed 02 July 2017).

The National Archives (1998) Data Protection Act 1998, Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/UKPGA/1998/29/contents (Accessed 31 March 2017).

The National Archives (2010) Equality Act 2010, Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents (Accessed 31 March 2017).

The National Archives (2015) Consumer Rights Act 2015, Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/15/contents/enacted (Accessed 08 December 2016)

Thomas, C. (2007) 'Experiences of Struggling African American Students in a Predominantly White University', 14 (2) pp. 1-17.

Thomas, J. and Harden, A. (2007) 'Methods for the thematic synthesis of qualitative research in systematic reviews.' *National Centre for Research Methods,* (10) pp. 1-20.

Thompson, L. F. Surface, E. A. Martin, D. L. and Sanders, M. G. (2003). 'From paper to pixels: Moving personnel surveys to the Web'. *Personnel Psychology*, 56 (1) pp. 197–227.

Thornsteinson, T. and Highhouse, S. (2003) 'Effects of goal framing in job advertisements on organisational attractiveness', *Journal of Applied Social Psychology,* 33 (11) pp. 2393-2412.

Times Higher Education (2017) Teaching excellence framework (TEF) results 2017, Available at: https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/teaching-excellence-framework-tef-results-2017#survey-answer (Accessed 04 October 2018)

Tobin, D. and Flynn, N (2017) *Research Methods*, London: Centre for Finance and Management Studies.

Tomlinson, M. (2017) 'Student perceptions of themselves as 'consumers' of higher education,' *British Journal of Sociology and Education,* 38 (40) pp. 450-467.

Tomlinson, M. (2017) 'Conceptions of the value of higher education in a measured market,' *Higher Education,* 75 pp. 711-727.

Tonks, D. and Farr, M (1995) 'Market segments for higher education: using geo-demographics', *Marketing Intelligence and Planning,* 13 (4) pp. 24-33.

Truell, A.D. Bartlett, J.E. and Alexander, M.W. (2002) 'Response rate, speed, and completeness: A comparison of Internet-based and mail surveys', *Behaviour Research Methods, Instruments and Computer,* 34 (1) pp. 46-49.

Turabian, K. L. (2013) *A Manual for Writers: of research papers, theses and dissertations,* 8th Edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Universities UK (2014) Patterns and Trends in UK Higher Education, Available at: http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-andanalysis/reports/Documents/2014/patterns-and-trends-in-uk-higher-education-2014.pdf (Accessed 8th December 2016).

Unluer, S. (2012) 'Being an Insider Researcher While Conducting Case Study Research', *The Qualitative Report,* 17 (58) pp. 1-14.

Usher-Smith, J. Murrell, G. Ellis, H. and Huang, C. (2010) *Research in Medicine – Planning a project – Writing a thesis,* 3rd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Vagias, W. M. (2006). 'Likert-type scale response anchors,' *Clemson International Institute for Tourism & Research Development, Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management. Clemson University.*

Varadanin, V. (2017) 'Marketing activities of higher education institutions,' *Megatrend Revija,* 14 (1) pp. 305-326.

Varble, D. L. and Hawes, J. M. (2009) *Developing a Culture of Continuous Student Recruitment,* MMA Fall Educators' Conference, 2009.

Vargo, S.L. and Lusch, R.F. (2004) 'Evolving to a new dominant logic for marketing', *Journal of Marketing,* 68 (1) pp. 1-17.

Varman, R. Biswatosh, S, and Per-Skalen, K. (2011) 'Market subjectivity and neoliberal Government ality in higher education', *Journal of Marketing Management,* 27 (11-12) pp. 1163-1185

Vaughan, R. (2018) 'Three UK universities on the brink of bankruptcy and more reliant on short-term loans 'to survive'', Available at: https://inews.co.uk/news/education/university-bankruptcy-reliant-on-loans/ (Accessed 14 November 2018)

Vivyan, C. (2009) An Introductory Self-Help Course in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Available at: http://dbtselfhelp.com/SelfHelpCourse.pdf (Accessed 31 March 2017).

Vossemsteyn, J. (2002) *Perceptions on student loans: Price responsiveness and student borrowing behaviour (unpublished manuscript),* Enschede, CHEPS.

Vught, F.A. (1989) *Government al Strategies and Innovation in Higher Education,* London: Jessica Kingsley.

Vyskocilova, J. Prasko, J. and Slepecky, M. (2011) 'Empathy in cognitive behavioural therapy and supervision,' *Act Nerv Super Rediviva*, 53 (2) pp. 72–83.

Wan, D. Tak, K.H. and Tiang, L. (2003) 'Factors affecting Singaporeans' acceptance of international postings,' *Personnel Review,* 32 (6) pp. 711-732.

Watson A. (2018) Co-constructing Mentoring and it its use within a Higher Education Provider, Available at: http://ipda.org.uk/co-constructing-mentoring-and-its-use-within-a-higher-education-provider/ (Accessed 27 April 2019)

Webb, E.J. Campbell, D.T. Schwartz, R.D. and Sechrest, L. (1966) *Unobtrusive Measures: Nonreactive Measures in the Social Sciences,* Chicago: Rand McNally.

Webster, F.E. Jr. (1992) 'The changing role of marketing in the corporation', *Journal of Marketing,* 56 (4) pp. 1-17.

Weible, R. and Wallace, J. (1998) 'Cyberre search: The impact of the Internet on data collection', *Marketing Research*, 10 pp. 19-25.

Weimer, D. L. and Vinning, A. R. (1999) *Policy Analysis: Concepts ad Practice,* 3rd Edition, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Weitershausen, I.V. (2014) How to stay sane through a PhD: get survival tips from fellow students, Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/blog/2014/mar/20/phd-research-mental-health-tips (Accessed 14 March 18).

Wellman, B. and Haythornthwaite, C. (2002). *The Internet in Everyday Life*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Westphal, L. (200) 'Use Testimonials and Be More Persuasive', *Direct Marketing,* pp 35.

White, C. S. (1982) 'A Validation Study of the Barth-Shermis Social Studies Preference Scale,' *Theory and Research in Social Education,* 10 (2) pp. 1-20.

White, M (2018) 'Student partnership, trust and authority in universities,' *Educational Philosophy and Theory,* 50 (2) pp. 163-173.

Whiteside, T. (1992) '*The Alliance and the Shaping of the Agenda', in Whiteside, T. Sutton, A. Everton, T (eds) 16-19 Changes in Education and Training,* London: David Fulton.

Whitley, E. and Ball, J. (2002) 'Statistics review 6: Nonparametric methods,' *Critical Care,* 6. (6) pp. 509–513.

Whitty, G. Power, S.,and Halpin, D. (1998*) Devolution and choice in education: The school, the state and the market.* Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Wigmore, T. (2015) The worst place for poor students in the UK? Scotland: free education in Scotland: a bung for the middle class, paid for by the poor, Available at: http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/education/2015/12/worst-place-poor-students-uk-scotland (Accessed 27 June 2016).

Wilford, J. (2011) Marketing Further Education on a budget, Available at: http://www.fenews.co.uk/featured-article/marketing-further-education-on-a-budget (Accessed 27 August 2012).

Wilkins, S. and Huisman, J. (2011) 'Student Recruitment at International Branch Campuses: Can They Compete in the Global Market?', *Journal of Studies in International Education,* 15 (3) pp. 299-316.

Woldt, A. L. (2009) 'Gestalt Pedagogy – Creativity in Teaching', *Gestalt Review*, 13 (2) pp. 135-148.

Wolf, C. Jr. (1988) *Markets or Government s: Choosing between Imperfect Alternatives,* Cambridge: MIT Press.

Wong, B. and Chiu, Y. T. (2017) 'Let me entertain you: the ambivalent role of university lecturers as educators and performers,' *Educational Review,* pp 1-16.

Woo, K. and Fock, H.K.Y. (2004) 'Retaining and divesting customers: An exploratory study of right customer, 'at risk' right customers, and wrong customers, *Journal of Services Marketing,* 18 (3) pp. 187-197.

Wright, K. (2005) 'Researching Internet-Based Populations: Advantages and Disadvantages of Online Survey Research, Online Questionnaire Authoring Software Packages, and Web Survey Services', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication,* 10 (3).

Yang, S. Alessandri, S. and Kinsey, D. (2008) 'An Integrative Analysis of Reputation and Relational Quality: A Study of University-Student Relationships', *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education,* 18 (2) pp. 145-170.

Yassi, A. Dharamsi, S. Speigel, J. Rojas, A. Dean, E. and Woolard, R. (2010) 'The good, the bad , and the ugly of partnered research: Revisiting the sequestration thesis and the rile of universities in promoting social justice', *International Journal of Health Services,* 40 (3) pp. 485- 505.

Yeasmin, S. and Raham, K.F. (2012) ''Triangulation' Research Method as the Tool of Social Science Research,' *BUP JOURNAL*, 1 (1) pp. 154-163.

Yilmaz, R. (2017) 'Exploring the role of e-learning readiness on student satisfaction and motivation in flipped classroom,' *Computers in Human Behaviour,* 70 pp 251-260.

Yin, R. K. (1984) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods,* USA: Sage.

Yin, R. (2009) *Case study research: Design and methods,* Fourth Edition, California: Sage Publications.

Yin, R. (2014) *Case study research: Design and methods*, Fifth Edition, California: Sage Publications.

Young, R.A. and Collin, A. (2004) 'Introduction: Constructivism and social constructionism in the career field', *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 64 pp. 373-388.

Young, S. (2002) 'The use of market mechanisms in higher education finance and state control: Ontario considered', *The Canadian Journal,* 2 pp. 79-102.

Yow, V.R. (1994) *Recording Oral History: A Practical Guide for Social Scientists*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Yun, G. W. and Trumbo, C. W. (2000). 'Comparative response to a survey executed by post, email, and web form', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 6 (1).

Zagzebski, L. (2017) *The Blackwell Guide to Epistemology.* Edited by John Greco and Ernest Sosa, Newcastle, Wiley-Blackwell.

Zainal, Z. (2007) 'Case study as a research method', *Journal of Humanities,* 9 pp. 1-6.

Zamanou, S. and Glaser, S.R. (1994) 'Moving Toward Participation and Involvement', *Group and Organisation Management,* 19 (4) pp. 475-502.

Zelin, A (2011) 'Uses for Census Data in Market Research,' *Sampling & RMC, Ipsos MORI,* pp 1-43.

Zhao, J. and Guo, J. (2002) 'The restructuring of China's higher education: an experience for market economy and knowledge economy', Educational Philosophy and Theory, 34 (2) pp. 207–20.

Ziguras, C. and Law, S. (2006) 'Recruiting international students as skilled migrants: The global 'skills race' as viewed from Australia and Malaysia', *Globalisation, Societies and Education,* 4 (1) pp. 59-76

Appendix A Mapping interview questions to the research questions

Interview questions	Justification	Research question	Conceptual framework
I1. Using your own knowledge and experience of the higher education sector can you provide an overview of the changes that have occurred within this marketplace and the impacts this has had on the 'For Profit' HEP over the last five years.	This will give participants the opportunity to explain the HE market and the acquiring taught degree awarding power and university title. At this point the participants may begin to expand and explore blended delivery and the For-Profit HEP learning model	RQ1	Corporate Brand
I2. Can you describe any changes in pedagogic approach, including current and future enhancements to this area within the For-Profit HEP?	The question is asked to identify any changes within the delivery of programmes and teaching. This will be a follow on question from I1 and **probe** changes in the marketplace have led to changes in teaching and programme delivery. This could link to the literature on vocational programmes and the reduction in academic subjects. Participants may allude to deskilling in some areas and upskilling in others.	RQ1	Corporate Brand
I3. How does the institution deliver its programmes and what is your experience of the successes and shortcomings of	Participants will identify both distance and blended learning delivery. **Probing** further is likely to be on blended delivery.	RQ1	Corporate Brand

these to date?			
I4 As well as internal stakeholders within the institution are any other stakeholders involved in the development of programmes, pedagogy and mode of delivery, if so can you explain who they are and elaborate on their roles?	This will identify the presence of other stakeholders when developing programmes, their input and their role within the development or programmes. It will be interesting to **probe** and observe whether the student, parents and businesses are covered as per the literature from chapter 2.	RQ1	Satisfaction/ Affective Commitment
I5. Please explain the development of the chosen segmentation strategy in place when targeting students for blended delivery.	The question is being asked to gather data on certain segments being identified through market research that are suitable for the blended mode of delivery.	RQ3	Student Segmentation
I6. What plans are in place for periodic reviews of the segmentation strategy and have there been, or would you suggest, any changes to the strategy? If so what are they and why?	This could **probe** responses on the successes and shortcomings of formal segmentation programmes. It will be interesting to determine if any of the segmentation strategies used can be related to strategies from the literature review. Probing demographic make-up may also lead to relevant data being collected.	RQ3	Student Segmentation
I7. Please elaborate on the current student recruitment strategy, with particular reference to the strategy's aims and processes?	Understanding the current strategy may reveal similarities to that of Chapman (1998). Further **probing** could also highlight intrinsic and extrinsic motivators and link to variables contained within the conceptual framework.	RQ3	Recruitment Strategy/ Push and Pull Factors

I8. From experience does the current recruitment process entice students? What do you think are the motives of students that attract them to the For-Profit HEP?	This will link to expectations and perceptions of student recruitment processes.	RQ2/RQ3	Recruitment Strategy/ Push and Pull Factors/ Affective Commitment/ Satisfaction/ Calculative Commitment/ Corporate Brand
I9. In your opinion how effective is the link between the recruitment strategy and student motives?	It is anticipated that some participants will be able to answer this question in more depth than others. For instance, those at an operational level may have more input into this answer in comparison to those at an executive level.	RQ2/RQ3	Recruitment Strategy/ Affective Commitment/ Satisfaction/ Calculative Commitment/ Corporate Brand
I10. Through your own observations and knowledge of communication within recruitment strategy which methods have worked well to encourage student recruitment to the For-Profit HEP and why?	Again experience will differ here and responses may be more detailed from some in comparison to others. **Probing** those participants at a higher level may draw from sector experience and provide suggestions for enhancements.	RQ4	Recruitment Strategy/ Push and Pull Factors
I11. Are there any other observations regarding the recruitment strategy and channels of communication used that you might want to comment on, for instance,	Participants may consider strategies that have been less successful when recruiting students.	RQ4	Recruitment Strategy/ Push and Pull Factors

any approaches or methods that have been more or less effective since the recruitment started in 2016 to the present time?			
I12. From the discussion you have just been involved in do you have any further recommendations for the For-Profit HEP in terms of pedagogy, mode of delivery, stakeholder involvement, segmentation, student recruitment and communication?	This will summarise the interview and allow participants to add to any previous responses identifying opportunities for future success.	RQ1/RQ3/ RQ4	Satisfaction/ Corporate Brand/ Student Segmentation/ Recruitment Strategy

Appendix B Survey questions

A Mixed Methods Study Exploring the Impacts of Marketisation in a Case Study Higher Education Provider

Hello,

Thank you for agreeing to be involved in my PhD research on the Impact of Marketisation within Higher Education. As part of the research I am required to survey students to gather data on reasons for selecting the University. All responses will remain confidential. Responses from the survey will form a wider analysis on the University's recruitment strategies. Data collected may also inform wider strategic debate on issues surrounding student experience and course development.

Please answer all questions in full and click on "next" after each page. At the end of the survey please click on "finish" in order for your responses to be recorded. Only fully completed surveys will be considered as part of the research. You do have the right to withdraw from the survey and you can opt out of taking part in the research.

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey. Your views are important and will add to academic debate and contribute towards enhancing processes within the University, which will be to the benefit of future students and enable the HEI to improve its guidance and advice processes.

If you have any queries please contact me at alison.watson@tees.ac.uk

Thank you.

1. Course start date:

October 2016	
February 2017	
June 2017	
October 2017	

2. Current course chosen:

Foundation Business	
Foundation Healthcare	
Foundation Computing	
BA Business	
BA Healthcare	
BSc Computing	
LLB Law	
BA Psychology and Criminology	
BA Business Top Up	
BA Healthcare	
BSc Computing	
MBA	
Other (please provide details)	

3. Which of the following best describes the reasons for selecting this University? 1 being the most influential reason for selecting the university, 2 being less influential, and 3 being the least. (The codes are representative of four main areas attached to student recruitment, those being: satisfaction, emotions, cost and brand.)

S1	Course content – academic content and learning materials	
S2	Access to technology – online learning facilities and module pages	
S3	Blended approach to learning – the combination of on campus seminars, online learning materials and flexibility of learning	
S4	Skills development – practical skills development of the course concepts and personal skills development	
S5	Service received and interactions with the University – including admissions and student support	
S6	Recommendation by other – Parent	
S7	Recommendation by other – Peer	
S8	Recommendation by other – Employer	
S9	Recommendation by other – School or College	
S10	Past experience of the University	
S11	Past experience of the tutor's expertise in the subject area	
S12	Demanding higher wages upon completion	
S13	Employment opportunities as a result of the qualification	
S14	Other (Please state)	
A1	Emotional attachment to the University based on prior experience	
A2	Location of the University	
A3	Feeling safe	
A4	Ease of acquiring accommodation	
A5	Social life with peers	
A6	Available facilities, for example, library resources, student support	
A7	Lifestyle perceptions and quality of life whilst studying	
A8	On- campus clubs	
A9	Campus environment including a student friendly environment	
A10	Encouragement to enrol from the University's admissions advisors	
A11	Practical factors associated with ease of access and study	
A12	Inclusion and accepted as being a part of the University	
A13	Participation and potential views being listened to	
A14	Enhancement of skills	
A15	Being near to home and a support network	
A16	Other (Please state)	
C1	Cost of the course	
C2	Access to student loans and bursaries	

C3	Performed a favourable cost-benefit analysis prior to enrolment	
C4	Believe the course is value for money	
C5	Other (Please state)	
[redacted]		
B1	Accredited University	
B2	Reputable programmes and courses	
B3	Good reputation of the University	
B4	Trust the University brand	
B5	Good University image	
B6	Quality brand and course content	
B7	University ranking and reviews in university guides based on the entire university experience	
B8	Recommended by others as a good university brand	
B9	Influenced by social media	
B10	Others (Please state)	
[redacted]		

4. Do you have any additional comments you want to make based on the previous question?

5. How did you find out about the University? Please select the most appropriate option by placing a tick next to it.

Through the website of the University	
Radio advertisement	
Bill boards	
Bus advertisements	
Newspaper advertisements	
Prospectuses	
Open days	
From walking into the University.	
Career Fairs	
Social media, for example Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.	
Recommendations from others	
Search engines	
Other (Please state)	

6. Which method of communication and advertising from question 5 did you find most informative and why?

7. Which method of communication and advertising from question 5 did you find least effective and why?

8. Do you have any recommendations which might improve the exposure and advertising of the University when recruiting students? If so what are they?

9. What are your thoughts on the blended learning delivery model? What do you like/dislike about it and why?

10. From prior educational experience do you consider your course to be traditional academic or more vocational and work based? Please give reasons for your answer.

11. What do you hope to achieve once the course is complete and you have been awarded your qualification?

12. Campus you are studying at:

Ealing, London	
Tower Hill, London	
Holborn, London	
Birmingham	
Manchester	

13. Please state your gender:

Male	
Female	
Prefer not to say	

14. Please state your age group:

18-30	
31-50	
51 and above	
Prefer not to say	

15. Please state your household status:

Homeowner	
Rented	
Living with Parents	
Other (Please state)	

16. Please state your marital status:

Single	
Married	
Divorced	
Civil partnership	
Living together	
Other (Please state)	

17. Please state your ethnic origin:

Ethnicity (Please state)	
Prefer not to say	

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.

Appendix C Pilot study results for the interview

Original interview question	Feedback from the1st pilot study	Reworded interview question	Feedback from the 2nd pilot study	Final interview question
I1. Using your own knowledge and experience of the higher education sector can you provide an overview of the changes that have occurred within this marketplace and the impacts this has had on the 'For Profit HEP over the last five years.	"Might generate an essay in response."	The question remains the same as it will be interesting to gauge participants understanding of the sector and how it has impacted the HEI over the set time period.	"Might you consider asking the Q about the X number of significant changes to give the Q some sort of boundary?"	After some deliberation it was decided to leave the question and not to set any parameters. Participants need to feel that they can express themselves and allowing this fits well with the inductive approach.
I2. Can you discuss any changes in pedagogic approach, including current and future enhancements to this area within the For-Profit HEP?	"Are you being deliberately vague? Can you direct the participants to the learning model etc.? If not use probing". "Might just generate a yes/no response- if they do respond it could well be an essay"	Remains the same and will follow up with probing questions if required. Steering away from leading questions. An in-depth answer is what is ideally being looked for.	"Wouldn't this suggest more specific questions are required?" "Change "discuss" to "describe –seems judgemental."	I2. Can you describe any changes in pedagogic approach, current and future enhancements to this area within the For-Profit HEP? The participants selected all have had input into the development of the blended delivery mode of study. Further probing questions will be used to develop responses where necessary.
I3. How does the institution deliver its programmes and what is your experience of the successes and shortcomings of these to date?	"Ethical considerations here – will xxxx be totally out of this? Could potentially re phrase to how could it be done better?"	The name of the institution will remain anonymous. Probing will be encouraged to seek clarity (if required) on what could be done better.	No actions.	No actions.
I4 Other than the institution are any other stakeholders	"Will the sample know who these	The participants have been selected	"Not clear, think about	I4 As well as internal

involved in the development of programmes, pedagogy and mode of delivery, if so can you explain who they are and elaborate on their roles?	stakeholders are?"	in a purposeful manner to ensure they can respond to this question.	rewording."	stakeholders within the institution are any other stakeholders involved in the development of programmes, pedagogy and mode of delivery? If so can you explain who they are and elaborate on their roles?
I5 Are you able to explain the segmentation strategy in place when targeting students for blended delivery?	"There is already information available on this. Perhaps you want to focus the questioning on how this market research was carried out and what prompted them to focus on the selected markets." "Again could be a yes/no."	I5. Please explain the development of the chosen segmentation strategy in place when targeting students for blended delivery.		
I6. Would you suggest any changes to the segmentation strategy? If so what are they and why?	"Only been in place for a year or so, so may be too soon." "How often is this reviewed?" "Does the strategy vary by course/programme?"	I6. Do you carry out any periodic review of the segmentation strategy and would you suggest any changes to strategy? If so what are they and why?	"Or consider what were the drivers that led to.....?" "Perhaps a more open Q such as 'What plans are in place for review.....etc? There are two questions here? The second Q can only be answered if a review has already taken place? Or is the Q based upon 'what changes would you consider in the light of	I6. What plans are in place for periodic reviews of the segmentation strategy and have there been, or would you suggest, any changes to the strategy? If so what are they and why?

			experience?”	
I7. Can you expand on the current student recruitment strategy, the aims and processes of this?	“Again could be a yes/no.”	I7. Please elaborate on the current student recruitment strategy, the aims and processes of this?	No actions.	No actions.
I8. From experience does the current recruitment process entice students? What do you think are the motives of students that attract them to the For-Profit HEP?	“Anything with motives is a tricky area- this question is screaming out for ambiguous responses.”	The question remains the same as this could link back to reasons linked to the themes.	No actions.	No actions.
I9. In your opinion how effective is the link between recruitment strategy and student motives?	“Are you interested in opinion?”	Remains the same as this could lead to future recommendations being made by key informants.	No actions.	No actions.
I10. Through your own observations and knowledge of communication within the recruitment strategy which methods have worked well to encourage student recruitment to the For-Profit HEP and why?	“Do you want to explore what doesn’t work?”	The questions remains the same I11 has been made more explicit.	No actions.	No actions.
I11. Any other observations regarding the recruitment strategy and channels of communication used within the segmentation and student recruitment process?	See comment for I10.	I11. Are there any other observations regarding the recruitment strategy and channels of communication used you want to comment on, for instance, any approaches or methods that have been less effective?	“Or more effective?” “Then what? Are you benchmarking, and if so, what are the standards and over what time frames?”	I11. Are there any other observations regarding the recruitment strategy and channels of communication used that you might want to comment on, for instance, any approaches or methods that have been more or less effective since the recruitment started in 2016 to the present time?
I12. From the discussion you have just been involved in do you have any further recommendations for the For-Profit HEP in terms of pedagogy, mode of delivery, stakeholder involvement, segmentation and communication?	“Communication - is this not just promotional methods? You may need to think about prompting.” “You may want to ask for some written responses to your	The questions will be sent in advance to all participants. Written answers were not asked for due to time limitations on the participants, particularly those at an executive	“Is it not each of these leading to student recruitment?” “The interview questions I think are generally fine.	The question remains the same. The responses may lead to student recruitment, however, it could be that other answers focus more on one of the other

	questions first to form the basis for further discussion and probing.” “Include student recruitment.”	level as their diaries were very busy. I12. From the discussion you have just been involved in do you have any further recommendations for the For-Profit HEI in terms of pedagogy, mode of delivery, stakeholder involvement, segmentation, student recruitment and communication?	so long as the interviewee knows some of the jargon or strategy terminology it will be OK but be prepared to define certain terms such as ’segmentation strategy’ if they do not. If you need to define things have a standard definition ready so that you do not introduce bias by defining it is different terms to different interviewees.”	elements. A glossary of terms will be sent to all participants prior to them being conducted.

Pilot study results for the survey

Survey Question	Feedback Received from Pilot Study 1	Amended Question	Feedback Received from Pilot Study 2	Final Amended Question
1	"Move the study centres to the end of the questionnaire with the demographic information."	Relocated to the section on demographics.	"Consider moving it to the end?"	The question has been moved towards the end of the survey but it remains in its current place as it follows questions relating to the HEP rather than demographic questions.
2			"Remove "by month." "Include the word "course before start date."	Yes, fine, updated both.
3	"Criminology and Psychology running from October too. Are ACCA courses?" "BA Business, all pathways?"	Added the two additional courses to the question. BA Business only, the pathways are not running.	"Reword to current course chosen."	Updated. The wording is clearer.
4	"Ask students to rank in order of importance and randomise the questions online." "Include an "others" box." "What about the content? Interests me personally, is relevant to my job or I need to get my desired job." "Access to technology isn't a reason in itself… think you may need to reword these, e.g. I was attracted to the use of technology." S3- "Influence of contact hours, online element of the course, flexibility of delivery." S5- "Influence of the admissions team." "General interest in the study topic."	Students can now select more than one option. If SurveyMonkey permits the options will be randomised. "Others" box has been included for all options. Course content confirmed in terms of learning materials. Access to technology confirmed to online facilities. S3 Included flexibility of learning. S5 added the admissions team. S14 covers other reasons which could include	"Marking what? Consider saying explicitly that they should tick the box" Coding, "Do participants need to know this?" "Would it be useful to get them to rank them?" "To improve the precision of your analysis later on, I suggest separating these issues-since choice of university and choice of course are at different	Tick instruction has been given. This has been highlighted previously as important from pilot study 1. The content remains, although this is now in brackets. SurveyMonkey is being checked for this. The aim of the survey is to gather data on the HEI in its entirety. The course content is only one element.

		general interest in the topic.	levels of analysis, and are not the same."	
	B possible options- "Influence of social media, university guides"	B9 updated to include social media. B7 updated to include university guides.	Blended, "Will they ALL know what this is?"	This has been made clearer.
	"S3 refers to "Blended approach to learning"- have the respondents no option to consider other approaches (distance/online/face to face)? A similar comment applied to Q10."	S3 & S10 the focus is specific to the blended delivery and the course the students have selected.	B7 - "Of what? Is the ranking on teaching or on research-which is most important to students? If you leave this as it is, you will receive an averaging effect which is presumably not what you want."	This has been made clearer.
	A12-"What do you mean by this?"	A12 has been updated to reflect the student being included within the university.		
	"Question 4 has a lot of possible answers; might be worth making it clear to the reader as to whether they are meant to select one response from each of the categories."		"You would collect more information if you used a ranking system."	As above this is being looked into.
	"I'd suggest an "other" box with the ability to write in their answers for question 4."	Entry requirements could come within the "others" section in any of the categories. Students will state any additional reasons.	A1 –"not clear, what does it mean?" A2 – "include "of the university." A4- "change "gain" to "acquire."	Expanded and updated. Updated. Updated.
	Entry requirements might be a factor worth considering as xxxx offers non-standard entry."		A6 – "expand with examples." A9- "include student friendly environment."	Updated Updated.
	"Can they choose more than one?"	Updated, yes this is possible.		
	"S6-S9-"Would this be recommendation rather than referral?"	S6-S9 students take consider recommendations rather than formal referrals made by others.	C3- "favourable" B9- "make clearer."	Updated. Reworded.
	S11-"I'm not sure what this means."	S11 included subject area to clarify tutor expertise.		
	S12- "This phrasing is an odd one out compared to the rest of the options which do not contain personal pronouns."	S12 rewritten to be more in line with the rest of the options.		
	A13-"They won't know this until they've hit one of the module evaluation points."	A13 this has been reworded to include the word "potential".		
	A14-"I think these are two completely different things unless you are talking about mastery."	A14 Reworded for ease of understanding.		
	B8-"Are these two separate things?"	B8 reworded and is now more logical and flows better.		

5	"Like what? What would you expect here? You might need to reword to be more instructive."	This has now moved up to Q4 as the first question has moved to the end with other control questions. The question remains the same as it was deemed important to enable students some opportunity for freedom to express their views without any lead from the researcher.		
6	"Do you want to dig deeper into which newspaper?" "Why only Ealing students? Students might walk into Tower Hill and ask." "What about family/friend recommendation, previous students?" "Do you want to be more specific, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc." "Review sites, friends, colleagues, other students, school visit, already studied with the institution." "From the College (Ealing)- will you just be surveying xxxx's Ealing based students?" "I'd suggest an "other" box with the ability to write in their answers." "Google?" Website -"Would you not be inclined to replace institution with xxxx University through this – given that it is going to students?" "Have you checked out with marketing whether they did anything else? Weren't they spraying pavements at one point?"	The option on newspaper has been left as it is otherwise this may distort the focus and detail from other options. For instance, which radio station, location of the bill boards, number bus etc. The option on the college has been reworded to include walk ins of all campuses. Recommendations have been included. Social media has been prompted with examples. Most included. Changed. Other box included. Search engines included. Cannot use the University name, however, for the students survey using the word university rather than institution may be clearer. This will be reworded throughout. An option for other communication methods has been included.		
7	"Use same terminology as in question 8."	Reworded the same terminology is now used.	"Communication from whom?"	Updated to include the word

	“Do you mean which of the above ways?” “Questions 7 & 8, does mode of communication mean medium or style?” “Is this based on the above? It might be worth making the link so that they don’t start thinking about how xxxx contacts them on a day to day basis.”	Reworded to reflect question the previous question. Changed the word “mode” to “method”.		advertising as to non-marketing experts the word “communication” could be vague.
8	“Use same terminology as in question 7.”	Reworded to be consistent.	“Communication from whom?”	Updated to include the word advertising as to non-marketing experts the word “communication” could be vague
9	“Isn’t this a closed question?”	Reworded to reflect an open question.		
10	“Break this question down into what is liked and not liked.” “I suggest you refer to YOUR past experience, i.e. the students.” “Blended learning delivery model-would your respondents automatically know what that meant?”	The question has been expanded. Students will know what blended is as the course is being advertised to include on and off campus teaching. This is also confirmed in S3.	“Why?”	Updated.
11	“Based on your experience on the course so far…” “Give options to select or on a scale of 1-10 based on one extreme to the other extreme.” “I suggest you refer to YOUR past experience, i.e. students.”	The question is not asking for experience so far on the course. The question has been reworded to include “prior educational experience”. After careful consideration the scale was not adopted as this question is reflective and open.		
12	“You might get clearer/easier to analyse responses if you offer some choices here with an “other” category for them to write in if they need to.” “Does this relate to whether the student felt included personally, or that the HEI is inclusive?”	The question has remained quite open so not to lead participants. Student motivations could differ. Not sure of this response. No further action taken.		
13	“Include an option “prefer not to say”. Two participants	Prefer not to say has been included.		

	recommended this. "You might need a third option with the new gender equality acts or prefer not to say option." "You need rather not say here."			
14	"I would suggest you add the option "Prefer not to say." "50+, what happens at this point which makes it not worth segmenting?"	Prefer not to say has been included. 50+ students are minimal and some may not wish to reveal their exact age.	"I would be tempted to reduce the number of options available in Q14 to a smaller number such as say 18 - 30, 31 - 50, 51+ or something that reflects your own need to classify by age rather than just every 5 years. It makes it much easier to run cross tabulations with other answers."	Updated as per the advice.
15			"Include other."	Updated.
General comments	"Would be worth adding a bit here (introduction) about why you are surveying students." "Do you want to add a section for them to make further comments that they think are relevant but not captured in the responses?" Sentence 2 and 3 of the introduction – "Are these not the same?" "You will need to explain the bases of your questions, (I recognise that the codes S,A,C,B relate to the four influences on procurement." "Reduce the options from the scale to gain definitive answers" "I would advise making this more specific as you don't want people withdrawing 6 months down the line." "Are you saying that students can pull out after they've submitted their questionnaires to you? If so, how?"	This has been reworded to be clearer. There are more options throughout for additional comments. Amended. This has been added to identify the coding. This has been reduced to three. The right to withdraw can be at any point within the research. No time limit has been placed on this to ensure students are not discriminated against. Students can withdraw from the process after	Introduction, line 3, "Might you consider this the other way round, selecting the university and the course of study?" Before the survey starts, "Consider providing instructions here, I.e. tick the answer that applies to you?" "Did you consider asking about ethnicity given what we know about different engagement from different ethnic/cultural groups?" "I recommend a title to the survey. First impressions are important as people will make an almost instant decision as to whether to read on…." "Include instructions for completion."	Course removed and only the University has been left in. This is in response to greatening precision of the research. Instructions have been included on the sections. Upon reflection this question has been included and will be analysed further as part of the data analysis process. Included. Included per section.

		completion if they want to. Email details have been provided if any queries arise. Any further detail on processes for withdrawing once the survey has been completed have been left out as this is not going to be encouraged.		

Appendix D Interview introduction

Inspiring success

Teesside University

Alison Watson

PhD

A Mixed Methods Study Exploring the Impact of Marketisation and Student Recruitment in a Case Study Higher Education Provider

TEESSIDE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Teesside University

Purpose and Focus

The research will examine the impact of Marketisation within the HEI environment and in particular this institution.

- Education reform and Marketisation leading to Blended Learning.
- Segmentation, recruitment and marketing communications for Blended Learning.

TEESSIDE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Teesside University

Implications of the PhD

- Theory – Marketisation and the impact on the shift from traditional teaching.
- Practice – Informing good practice with regards to segmentation, recruitment and marketing communications.
- Social – Understanding students' emotional attachments and creating a smooth transition through the student recruitment process.

TEESSIDE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Inspiring success

Teesside University

The Interview

- Seek answers to the four research questions.
- The questions have been developed from theory and the conceptual framework.
- All participants are considered "critical cases", Patton (2002).
- Participant rights.
- Informed consent.

TEESSIDE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Appendix E Satisfaction data set

Table E1 - Course content – academic content and learning materials –ethnicity

			Ethnicity									
			Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	Black or Black British – African	Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	White	Other Black Background	Asian or Asian British – Indian	Other Asian Background	Black or Black British – Caribbean	Mixed - White and Black African	Total
Course content – academic content and learning materials	Most influential	Count	5	80	4	23	20	2	15	10	1	160
		% within Ethnicity	62.5%	75.5%	80.0%	62.2%	90.9%	100.0%	65.2%	100.0%	100.0%	74.8%
	Less influential	Count	3	25	1	12	2	0	8	0	0	51
		% within Ethnicity	37.5%	23.6%	20.0%	32.4%	9.1%	0.0%	34.8%	0.0%	0.0%	23.8%
	Least influential	Count	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3
		% within Ethnicity	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%
Total		Count	8	106	5	37	22	2	23	10	1	214
		% within Ethnicity	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table E2 - Access to technology – online learning facilities and module pages –age

			Please state your age group:				
			18-30	31-50	51 and above	Prefer not to say	Total
Access to technology – online learning facilities and module pages	Most influential	Count	56	82	22	32	192
		% within Please state your age group:	62.2%	63.6%	68.8%	74.4%	65.3%
	Less influential	Count	17	35	10	9	71
		% within Please state your age group:	18.9%	27.1%	31.3%	20.9%	24.1%
	Least influential	Count	17	12	0	2	31
		% within Please state your age group:	18.9%	9.3%	0.0%	4.7%	10.5%
Total		Count	90	129	32	43	294
		% within Please state your age group:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table E3 - Blended approach to learning – the combination of on campus seminars, online learning materials and flexibility of learning – campus

			Which campus are you studying at?					
			Ealing, London	Tower Hill, London	Holborn, London	Birmingham	Manchester	Total
Blended approach to learning – the combination of on campus seminars, online learning materials and flexibility of learning	Most influential	Count	47	217	27	24	15	330
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	72.3%	77.5%	87.1%	100.0%	83.3%	78.9%
	Less influential	Count	15	54	4	0	3	76
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	23.1%	19.3%	12.9%	0.0%	16.7%	18.2%
	Least influential	Count	3	9	0	0	0	12
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	4.6%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%
Total		Count	65	280	31	24	18	418
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table E4 - Recommendation by other - peer – campus

			Which campus are you studying at?					
			Ealing, London	Tower Hill, London	Holborn, London	Birmingham	Manchester	Total
Recommendation by other – Peer	Most influential	Count	5	48	2	2	4	61
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	21.7%	33.6%	18.2%	20.0%	40.0%	31.0%
	Less influential	Count	4	49	3	0	2	58
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	17.4%	34.3%	27.3%	0.0%	20.0%	29.4%
	Least influential	Count	14	46	6	8	4	78
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	60.9%	32.2%	54.5%	80.0%	40.0%	39.6%
Total		Count	23	143	11	10	10	197
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table E5 - Recommendation by other - peer – age

			Please state your age group:				
			18-30	31-50	51 and above	Prefer not to say	Total
Recommendation by other - Peer	Most influential	Count	12	32	14	3	61
		% within Please state your age group:	18.5%	37.6%	56.0%	13.6%	31.0%
	Less influential	Count	15	28	6	9	58
		% within Please state your age group:	23.1%	32.9%	24.0%	40.9%	29.4%
	Least influential	Count	38	25	5	10	78
		% within Please state your age group:	58.5%	29.4%	20.0%	45.5%	39.6%
Total		Count	65	85	25	22	197
		% within Please state your age group:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table E6 - Demanding higher wages upon completion – cohort

			Course start date:				
			October 2016	February 2017	June 2017	October 2017	Total
Demanding higher wages upon completion	Most influential	Count	18	18	6	37	79
		% within Course start date:	60.0%	41.9%	50.0%	32.2%	39.5%
	Less influential	Count	7	15	3	51	76
		% within Course start date:	23.3%	34.9%	25.0%	44.3%	38.0%
	Least influential	Count	5	10	3	27	45
		% within Course start date:	16.7%	23.3%	25.0%	23.5%	22.5%
Total		Count	30	43	12	115	200
		% within Course start date:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Appendix F Calculative commitment data set

Table F1 - Cost of the course – cohort

			Course start date: October 2016	February 2017	June 2017	October 2017	Total
Cost of the course	Most influential	Count	44	58	8	201	311
		% within Course start date:	72.1%	76.3%	47.1%	72.6%	72.2%
	Less influential	Count	14	14	3	54	85
		% within Course start date:	23.0%	18.4%	17.6%	19.5%	19.7%
	Least influential	Count	3	4	6	22	35
		% within Course start date:	4.9%	5.3%	35.3%	7.9%	8.1%
Total		Count	61	76	17	277	431
		% within Course start date:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F2 - Cost of the course – programme

			Course_name: Foundation Business	Foundation Healthcare	Foundation Computing	BA Business	BA Healthcare Top-Up	BSc Comp	LLB Law	BA Psychology and Criminology	BA Bus Top-Up	BA Healthcare	MBA	Total
Cost of the course	Most influential	Count	57	68	1	29	37	17	19	7	28	47	1	311
		%	82.6%	67.3%	33.3%	80.6%	68.5%	50.0%	90.5%	100.0%	65.1%	75.8%	100.0%	72.2%
	Less influential	Count	7	26	2	4	12	13	1	0	9	11	0	85
		%	10.1%	25.7%	66.7%	11.1%	22.2%	38.2%	4.8%	0.0%	20.9%	17.7%	0.0%	19.7%
	Least influential	Count	5	7	0	3	5	4	1	0	6	4	0	35
		%	7.2%	6.9%	0.0%	8.3%	9.3%	11.8%	4.8%	0.0%	14.0%	6.5%	0.0%	8.1%
Total		Count	69	101	3	36	54	34	21	7	43	62	1	431
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F3 - Cost of the course – location

			Which campus are you studying at?					
			Ealing, London	Tower Hill, London	Holborn, London	Birmingham	Manchester	Total
Cost of the course	Most influential	Count	54	200	23	21	13	311
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	74.0%	69.4%	74.2%	100.0%	72.2%	72.2%
	Less influential	Count	15	62	4	0	4	85
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	20.5%	21.5%	12.9%	0.0%	22.2%	19.7%
	Least influential	Count	4	26	4	0	1	35
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	5.5%	9.0%	12.9%	0.0%	5.6%	8.1%
Total		Count	73	288	31	21	18	431
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F4 - Cost of the course – gender

			Please state your gender:			
			Male	Female	Prefer not to say	Total
Cost of the course	Most influential	Count	105	160	46	311
		% within Please state your gender:	67.7%	72.1%	85.2%	72.2%
	Less influential	Count	38	40	7	85
		% within Please state your gender:	24.5%	18.0%	13.0%	19.7%
	Least influential	Count	12	22	1	35
		% within Please state your gender:	7.7%	9.9%	1.9%	8.1%
Total		Count	155	222	54	431
		% within Please state your gender:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F5 - Cost of the course – age

			Please state your age group:				
			18-30	31-50	51 and above	Prefer not to say	Total
Cost of the course	Most influential	Count	90	133	29	59	311
		% within Please state your age group:	67.7%	70.4%	74.4%	84.3%	72.2%
	Less influential	Count	28	45	5	7	85
		% within Please state your age group:	21.1%	23.8%	12.8%	10.0%	19.7%
	Least influential	Count	15	11	5	4	35
		% within Please state your age group:	11.3%	5.8%	12.8%	5.7%	8.1%
Total		Count	133	189	39	70	431
		% within Please state your age group:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F6- Cost of the course - household status

			Please state your household status:				
			Homeowner	Rented	Living with Parents	Prefer not to say	Total
Cost of the course	Most influential	Count	13	175	37	86	311
		% within Please state your household status:	59.1%	73.2%	67.3%	74.8%	72.2%
	Less influential	Count	6	47	9	23	85
		% within Please state your household status:	27.3%	19.7%	16.4%	20.0%	19.7%
	Least influential	Count	3	17	9	6	35
		% within Please state your household status:	13.6%	7.1%	16.4%	5.2%	8.1%
Total		Count	22	239	55	115	431
		% within Please state your household status:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F7- Cost of the course - marital status

			Please state your marital status:						
			Single	Married	Divorced	Civil partnership	Living together	Prefer not to say	Total
Cost of the course	Most influential	Count	112	82	10	2	7	98	311
		% within Please state your marital status:	70.0%	69.5%	76.9%	66.7%	46.7%	80.3%	72.2%
	Less influential	Count	34	28	2	1	5	15	85
		% within Please state your marital status:	21.3%	23.7%	15.4%	33.3%	33.3%	12.3%	19.7%
	Least influential	Count	14	8	1	0	3	9	35
		% within Please state your marital status:	8.8%	6.8%	7.7%	0.0%	20.0%	7.4%	8.1%
Total		Count	160	118	13	3	15	122	431
		% within Please state your marital status:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F8 - Cost of the course - ethnicity

			Ethnicity									
			Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	Black or Black British – African	Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	White	Other Black Background	Asian or Asian British – Indian	Other Asian Background	Black or Black British – Caribbean	Mixed - White and Black African	Total
Cost of the course	Most influential	Count	9	86	5	16	25	2	20	9	1	173
		% within Ethnicity	81.8%	69.4%	83.3%	42.1%	92.6%	100.0%	69.0%	69.2%	100.0%	68.9%
	Less influential	Count	2	27	1	16	2	0	6	3	0	57
		% within Ethnicity	18.2%	21.8%	16.7%	42.1%	7.4%	0.0%	20.7%	23.1%	0.0%	22.7%
	Least influential	Count	0	11	0	6	0	0	3	1	0	21
		% within Ethnicity	0.0%	8.9%	0.0%	15.8%	0.0%	0.0%	10.3%	7.7%	0.0%	8.4%
Total		Count	11	124	6	38	27	2	29	13	1	251
		% within Ethnicity	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F9 - Access to student loans and bursaries - campus

			Which campus are you studying at?					
			Ealing, London	Tower Hill, London	Holborn, London	Birmingham	Manchester	Total
Access to student loans and bursaries	Most influential	Count	31	128	15	10	11	195
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	45.6%	46.2%	48.4%	71.4%	73.3%	48.1%
	Less influential	Count	25	92	5	3	3	128
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	36.8%	33.2%	16.1%	21.4%	20.0%	31.6%
	Least influential	Count	12	57	11	1	1	82
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	17.6%	20.6%	35.5%	7.1%	6.7%	20.2%
Total		Count	68	277	31	14	15	405
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F10- Access to student loans and bursaries - age group

			Please state your age group:				
			18-30	31-50	51 and above	Prefer not to say	Total
Access to student loans and bursaries	Most influential	Count	51	90	35	19	195
		% within Please state your age group:	41.8%	50.0%	68.6%	36.5%	48.1%
	Less influential	Count	51	52	10	15	128
		% within Please state your age group:	41.8%	28.9%	19.6%	28.8%	31.6%
	Least influential	Count	20	38	6	18	82
		% within Please state your age group:	16.4%	21.1%	11.8%	34.6%	20.2%
Total		Count	122	180	51	52	405
		% within Please state your age group:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F11- Performed a favourable cost-benefit analysis prior to enrolment –cohort

			Course start date:				Total
			October 2016	February 2017	June 2017	October 2017	
Performed a favourable cost-benefit analysis prior to enrolment	Most influential	Count	26	33	13	68	140
		% within Course start date:	48.1%	47.1%	68.4%	28.9%	37.0%
	Less influential	Count	15	31	4	107	157
		% within Course start date:	27.8%	44.3%	21.1%	45.5%	41.5%
	Least influential	Count	13	6	2	60	81
		% within Course start date:	24.1%	8.6%	10.5%	25.5%	21.4%
Total		Count	54	70	19	235	378
		% within Course start date:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F12- Believe the course is value for money – cohort

			Course start date:				Total
			October 2016	February 2017	June 2017	October 2017	
Believe the course is value for money	Most influential	Count	28	47	13	97	185
		% within Course start date:	54.9%	63.5%	68.4%	42.9%	50.0%
	Less influential	Count	17	12	5	59	93
		% within Course start date:	33.3%	16.2%	26.3%	26.1%	25.1%
	Least influential	Count	6	15	1	70	92
		% within Course start date:	11.8%	20.3%	5.3%	31.0%	24.9%
Total		Count	51	74	19	226	370
		% within Course start date:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F13- Believe the course is value for money – cohort

			Course_name											
			Foundation Business	Foundation Healthcare	Foundation Computing	BA Bus	BA Healthcare Top-Up	BSc Computing	LLB Law	BA Psychology and Criminology	BA Business Top-Up	BA Healthcare	MBA	Total
Believe the course is value for money	Most influential	Count	32	33	1	11	33	12	7	2	18	35	1	185
		%	50.8%	42.3%	50.0%	37.9%	71.7%	41.4%	36.8%	50.0%	51.4%	54.7%	100.0%	50.0%
	Less influential	Count	9	17	1	14	6	5	9	1	12	19	0	93
		%	14.3%	21.8%	50.0%	48.3%	13.0%	17.2%	47.4%	25.0%	34.3%	29.7%	0.0%	25.1%
	Least influential	Count	22	28	0	4	7	12	3	1	5	10	0	92
		%	34.9%	35.9%	0.0%	13.8%	15.2%	41.4%	15.8%	25.0%	14.3%	15.6%	0.0%	24.9%
Total		Count	63	78	2	29	46	29	19	4	35	64	1	370
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F14 - Believe the course is value for money - household status

			Please state your household status:				
			Homeowner	Rented	Living with Parents	Prefer not to say	Total
Believe the course is value for money	Most influential	Count	14	122	23	26	185
		% within Please state your household status:	60.9%	56.5%	48.9%	31.0%	50.0%
	Less influential	Count	5	54	12	22	93
		% within Please state your household status:	21.7%	25.0%	25.5%	26.2%	25.1%
	Least influential	Count	4	40	12	36	92
		% within Please state your household status:	17.4%	18.5%	25.5%	42.9%	24.9%
Total		Count	23	216	47	84	370
		% within Please state your household status:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table F15- Believe the course is value for money - marital status

			Please state your marital status:						Total
			Single	Married	Divorced	Civil partnership	Living together	Prefer not to say	
Believe the course is value for money	Most influential	Count	75	60	5	0	14	31	185
		% within Please state your marital status:	52.1%	61.9%	45.5%	0.0%	73.7%	31.6%	50.0%
	Less influential	Count	35	24	3	1	3	27	93
		% within Please state your marital status:	24.3%	24.7%	27.3%	100.0%	15.8%	27.6%	25.1%
	Least influential	Count	34	13	3	0	2	40	92
		% within Please state your marital status:	23.6%	13.4%	27.3%	0.0%	10.5%	40.8%	24.9%
Total		Count	144	97	11	1	19	98	370
		% within Please state your marital status:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Appendix G Affective commitment data set

Table G1 - Ease of acquiring accommodation - household status

			Please state your household status:				
			Homeowner	Rented	Living with Parents	Prefer not to say	Total
Ease of acquiring accommodation	Most influential	Count	0	26	10	9	45
		% within Please state your household status:	0.0%	23.6%	29.4%	32.1%	25.0%
	Less influential	Count	2	46	8	12	68
		% within Please state your household status:	25.0%	41.8%	23.5%	42.9%	37.8%
	Least influential	Count	6	38	16	7	67
		% within Please state your household status:	75.0%	34.5%	47.1%	25.0%	37.2%
Total		Count	8	110	34	28	180
		% within Please state your household status:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G2- Feeling safe – cohort

			Course start date:				
			October 2016	February 2017	June 2017	October 2017	Total
Feeling safe	Most influential	Count	23	44	11	93	171
		% within Course start date:	59.0%	77.2%	91.7%	63.7%	67.3%
	Less influential	Count	10	8	1	41	60
		% within Course start date:	25.6%	14.0%	8.3%	28.1%	23.6%
	Least influential	Count	6	5	0	12	23
		% within Course start date:	15.4%	8.8%	0.0%	8.2%	9.1%
Total		Count	39	57	12	146	254
		% within Course start date:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G3 - Campus environment including a student friendly environment – cohort

			Course start date: October 2016	February 2017	June 2017	October 2017	Total
Campus environment including a student friendly environment	Most influential	Count	15	26	10	57	108
		% within Course start date:	48.4%	57.8%	71.4%	54.3%	55.4%
	Less influential	Count	9	18	4	41	72
		% within Course start date:	29.0%	40.0%	28.6%	39.0%	36.9%
	Least influential	Count	7	1	0	7	15
		% within Course start date:	22.6%	2.2%	0.0%	6.7%	7.7%
Total		Count	31	45	14	105	195
		% within Course start date:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G4 - Emotional attachment to the University based on prior experience – cohort

			Course start date: October 2016	February 2017	June 2017	October 2017	Total
Emotional attachment to the University based on prior experience	Most influential	Count	12	11	2	23	48
		% within Course start date:	26.7%	23.4%	20.0%	14.9%	18.8%
	Less influential	Count	13	11	3	33	60
		% within Course start date:	28.9%	23.4%	30.0%	21.4%	23.4%
	Least influential	Count	20	25	5	98	148
		% within Course start date:	44.4%	53.2%	50.0%	63.6%	57.8%
Total		Count	45	47	10	154	256
		% within Course start date:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G5 - Location of the University - ethnicity

			Ethnicity									
			Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	Black or Black British – African	Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	White	Other Black Background	Asian or Asian British – Indian	Other Asian Background	Black or Black British – Caribbean	Mixed - White and Black African	Total
Location of the University	Most influential	Count	9	102	4	25	14	2	18	10	1	185
		% within Ethnicity	90.0%	86.4%	80.0%	75.8%	73.7%	100.0%	69.2%	83.3%	100.0%	81.9%
	Less influential	Count	1	11	0	5	2	0	5	2	0	26
		% within Ethnicity	10.0%	9.3%	0.0%	15.2%	10.5%	0.0%	19.2%	16.7%	0.0%	11.5%
	Least influential	Count	0	5	1	3	3	0	3	0	0	15
		% within Ethnicity	0.0%	4.2%	20.0%	9.1%	15.8%	0.0%	11.5%	0.0%	0.0%	6.6%
Total		Count	10	118	5	33	19	2	26	12	1	226
		% within Ethnicity	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G6 - Feeling safe - ethnicity

			Ethnicity									
			Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	Black or Black British – African	Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	White	Other Black Background	Asian or Asian British – Indian	Other Asian Background	Black or Black British – Caribbean	Mixed - White and Black African	Total
Feeling safe	Most influential	Count	5	49	2	12	12	1	10	5	1	97
		% within Ethnicity	83.3%	75.4%	66.7%	40.0%	70.6%	100.0%	58.8%	71.4%	100.0%	66.0%
	Less influential	Count	1	12	0	12	1	0	7	1	0	34
		% within Ethnicity	16.7%	18.5%	0.0%	40.0%	5.9%	0.0%	41.2%	14.3%	0.0%	23.1%
	Least influential	Count	0	4	1	6	4	0	0	1	0	16
		% within Ethnicity	0.0%	6.2%	33.3%	20.0%	23.5%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	10.9%
Total		Count	6	65	3	30	17	1	17	7	1	147
		% within Ethnicity	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G7 Being near to home and a support network – cohort

			Course start date: October 2016	February 2017	June 2017	October 2017	Total
Being near to home and a support network	Most influential	Count	23	22	7	58	110
		% within Course start date:	76.7%	57.9%	58.3%	56.3%	60.1%
	Less influential	Count	2	9	4	21	36
		% within Course start date:	6.7%	23.7%	33.3%	20.4%	19.7%
	Least influential	Count	5	7	1	24	37
		% within Course start date:	16.7%	18.4%	8.3%	23.3%	20.2%
Total		Count	30	38	12	103	183
		% within Course start date:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G8 - Being near to home and a support network – programme

			Course_name: Foundation Business	Foundation Healthcare	Foundation Computing	BA Business	BA Healthcare Top-Up	BSc Comp	LLB Law	BA Psychology and Criminology	BA Business Top-Up	BA Health	Total
Being near to home and a support network	Most influential	Count	22	16	0	7	18	11	5	2	9	20	110
		%	81.5%	42.1%	0.0%	70.0%	64.3%	61.1%	50.0%	100.0%	56.3%	64.5%	60.1%
	Less influential	Count	5	8	0	2	6	3	3	0	5	4	36
		%	18.5%	21.1%	0.0%	20.0%	21.4%	16.7%	30.0%	0.0%	31.3%	12.9%	19.7%
	Least influential	Count	0	14	3	1	4	4	2	0	2	7	37
		%	0.0%	36.8%	100.0%	10.0%	14.3%	22.2%	20.0%	0.0%	12.5%	22.6%	20.2%
Total		Count	27	38	3	10	28	18	10	2	16	31	183
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G9 - Social life with peers – cohort

			Course start date: October 2016	February 2017	June 2017	October 2017	Total
Social life with peers	Most influential	Count	16	23	6	45	90
		% within Course start date:	44.4%	51.1%	60.0%	41.7%	45.2%
	Less influential	Count	12	13	1	44	70
		% within Course start date:	33.3%	28.9%	10.0%	40.7%	35.2%
	Least influential	Count	8	9	3	19	39
		% within Course start date:	22.2%	20.0%	30.0%	17.6%	19.6%
Total		Count	36	45	10	108	199
		% within Course start date:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G10 - Social life with peers – programme

			Course_name: Foundation Business	Foundation Healthcare	Foundation Computing	BA Business	BA Healthcare Top-Up	BSc Computing	LLB Law	BA Psychology and Criminology	BA Business Top-Up	BA Healthcare	Total
Social life with peers	Most influential	Count	17	17	0	6	16	8	2	3	8	13	90
		%	53.1%	47.2%	0.0%	37.5%	55.2%	44.4%	16.7%	75.0%	44.4%	40.6%	45.2%
	Less influential	Count	11	12	1	6	6	6	6	1	7	14	70
		%	34.4%	33.3%	50.0%	37.5%	20.7%	33.3%	50.0%	25.0%	38.9%	43.8%	35.2%
	Least influential	Count	4	7	1	4	7	4	4	0	3	5	39
		%	12.5%	19.4%	50.0%	25.0%	24.1%	22.2%	33.3%	0.0%	16.7%	15.6%	19.6%
Total		Count	32	36	2	16	29	18	12	4	18	32	199
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G11- Social life with peers – campus

			Which campus are you studying at?					
			Ealing, London	Tower Hill, London	Holborn, London	Birmingham	Manchester	Total
Social life with peers	Most influential	Count	7	67	6	4	6	90
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	28.0%	47.9%	46.2%	40.0%	54.5%	45.2%
	Less influential	Count	10	46	6	5	3	70
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	40.0%	32.9%	46.2%	50.0%	27.3%	35.2%
	Least influential	Count	8	27	1	1	2	39
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	32.0%	19.3%	7.7%	10.0%	18.2%	19.6%
Total		Count	25	140	13	10	11	199
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G12 - Social life with peers – gender

			Please state your gender:			
			Male	Female	Prefer not to say	Total
Social life with peers	Most influential	Count	26	59	5	90
		% within Please state your gender:	39.4%	50.4%	31.3%	45.2%
	Less influential	Count	22	37	11	70
		% within Please state your gender:	33.3%	31.6%	68.8%	35.2%
	Least influential	Count	18	21	0	39
		% within Please state your gender:	27.3%	17.9%	0.0%	19.6%
Total		Count	66	117	16	199
		% within Please state your gender:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G13- Lifestyle perceptions and quality of life whilst studying - gender

			Please state your gender:			
			Male	Female	Prefer not to say	Total
Lifestyle perceptions and quality of life whilst studying	Most influential	Count	31	73	5	109
		% within Please state your gender:	41.9%	56.6%	35.7%	50.2%
	Less influential	Count	37	44	8	89
		% within Please state your gender:	50.0%	34.1%	57.1%	41.0%
	Least influential	Count	6	12	1	19
		% within Please state your gender:	8.1%	9.3%	7.1%	8.8%
Total		Count	74	129	14	217
		% within Please state your gender:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G14 - Lifestyle perceptions and quality of life whilst studying - age group

			Please state your age group:				
			18-30	31-50	51 and above	Prefer not to say	Total
Lifestyle perceptions and quality of life whilst studying	Most influential	Count	33	46	20	10	109
		% within Please state your age group:	47.1%	48.9%	66.7%	43.5%	50.2%
	Less influential	Count	30	40	8	11	89
		% within Please state your age group:	42.9%	42.6%	26.7%	47.8%	41.0%
	Least influential	Count	7	8	2	2	19
		% within Please state your age group:	10.0%	8.5%	6.7%	8.7%	8.8%
Total		Count	70	94	30	23	217
		% within Please state your age group:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G15- Practical factors associated with ease of access and study - cohort

			Course start date:				Total
			October 2016	February 2017	June 2017	October 2017	
Practical factors associated with ease of access and study	Most influential	Count	22	31	9	59	121
		% within Course start date:	66.7%	70.5%	69.2%	60.2%	64.4%
	Less influential	Count	8	9	3	29	49
		% within Course start date:	24.2%	20.5%	23.1%	29.6%	26.1%
	Least influential	Count	3	4	1	10	18
		% within Course start date:	9.1%	9.1%	7.7%	10.2%	9.6%
Total		Count	33	44	13	98	188
		% within Course start date:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G16- Practical factors associated with ease of access and study - programme

			Course_name										Total
			Foundation Business	Foundation Healthcare	Foundation Computing	BA Business	BA Healthcare Top-Up	BSc Computing	LLB Law	BA Psychology and Criminology	BA Business Top-Up	BA Healthcare	
Practical factors associated with ease of access and study	Most influential	Count	15	22	1	7	25	10	8	2	13	18	121
		%	62.5%	55.0%	50.0%	50.0%	73.5%	62.5%	80.0%	100.0%	81.3%	60.0%	64.4%
	Less influential	Count	8	12	1	7	6	3	1	0	3	8	49
		%	33.3%	30.0%	50.0%	50.0%	17.6%	18.8%	10.0%	0.0%	18.8%	26.7%	26.1%
	Least influential	Count	1	6	0	0	3	3	1	0	0	4	18
		%	4.2%	15.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.8%	18.8%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%	13.3%	9.6%
Total		Count	24	40	2	14	34	16	10	2	16	30	188
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G17- Available facilities, for example, library resources, student support - age group

			Please state your age group:				
			18-30	31-50	51 and above	Prefer not to say	Total
Available facilities, for example, library resources, student support	Most influential	Count	19	54	17	11	101
		% within Please state your age group:	27.9%	50.0%	56.7%	45.8%	43.9%
	Less influential	Count	28	36	12	8	84
		% within Please state your age group:	41.2%	33.3%	40.0%	33.3%	36.5%
	Least influential	Count	21	18	1	5	45
		% within Please state your age group:	30.9%	16.7%	3.3%	20.8%	19.6%
Total		Count	68	108	30	24	230
		% within Please state your age group:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G18- Campus environment including a student friendly environment - age group

			Please state your age group:				
			18-30	31-50	51 and above	Prefer not to say	Total
Campus environment including a student friendly environment	Most influential	Count	30	53	15	10	108
		% within Please state your age group:	46.9%	60.9%	57.7%	55.6%	55.4%
	Less influential	Count	26	29	9	8	72
		% within Please state your age group:	40.6%	33.3%	34.6%	44.4%	36.9%
	Least influential	Count	8	5	2	0	15
		% within Please state your age group:	12.5%	5.7%	7.7%	0.0%	7.7%
Total		Count	64	87	26	18	195
		% within Please state your age group:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G19- Campus environment including a student friendly environment - your household status

			Please state your household status:				
			Homeowner	Rented	Living with Parents	Prefer not to say	Total
Campus environment including a student friendly environment	Most influential	Count	11	73	12	12	108
		% within Please state your household status:	64.7%	60.8%	41.4%	41.4%	55.4%
	Less influential	Count	4	40	13	15	72
		% within Please state your household status:	23.5%	33.3%	44.8%	51.7%	36.9%
	Least influential	Count	2	7	4	2	15
		% within Please state your household status:	11.8%	5.8%	13.8%	6.9%	7.7%
Total		Count	17	120	29	29	195
		% within Please state your household status:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G20- Campus environment including a student friendly environment - ethnicity

			Ethnicity									
			Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	Black or Black British – African	Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	White	Other Black Background	Asian or Asian British – Indian	Other Asian Background	Black or Black British – Caribbean	Mixed - White and Black African	Total
Campus environment including a student friendly environment	Most influential	Count	5	46	3	10	2	0	7	4	0	77
		%	71.4%	71.9%	100.0%	38.5%	22.2%	0.0%	50.0%	80.0%	0.0%	59.2%
	Less influential	Count	2	16	0	10	6	0	6	1	1	42
		%	28.6%	25.0%	0.0%	38.5%	66.7%	0.0%	42.9%	20.0%	100.0%	32.3%
	Least influential	Count	0	2	0	6	1	1	1	0	0	11
		%	0.0%	3.1%	0.0%	23.1%	11.1%	100.0%	7.1%	0.0%	0.0%	8.5%
Total		Count	7	64	3	26	9	1	14	5	1	130
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

G21 - Encouragement to enrol from the University's admissions advisors -campus

			Which campus are you studying at?					
			Ealing, London	Tower Hill, London	Holborn, London	Birmingham	Manchester	Total
Encouragement to enrol from the University's admissions advisors	Most influential	Count	11	86	5	4	6	112
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	36.7%	51.2%	33.3%	26.7%	54.5%	46.9%
	Less influential	Count	14	68	8	10	2	102
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	46.7%	40.5%	53.3%	66.7%	18.2%	42.7%
	Least influential	Count	5	14	2	1	3	25
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	16.7%	8.3%	13.3%	6.7%	27.3%	10.5%
Total		Count	30	168	15	15	11	239
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

G22- Encouragement to enrol from the University's admissions advisors - ethnicity

			Ethnicity									
			Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	Black or Black British – African	Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	White	Other Black Background	Asian or Asian British – Indian	Other Asian Background	Black or Black British – Caribbean	Mixed - White and Black African	Total
Encouragement to enrol from the University's admissions advisors	Most influential	Count	3	47	3	10	12	0	2	3	1	81
		%	42.9%	58.0%	100.0%	40.0%	63.2%	0.0%	15.4%	42.9%	100.0%	51.6%
	Less influential	Count	3	30	0	9	5	0	6	4	0	57
		%	42.9%	37.0%	0.0%	36.0%	26.3%	0.0%	46.2%	57.1%	0.0%	36.3%
	Least influential	Count	1	4	0	6	2	1	5	0	0	19
		%	14.3%	4.9%	0.0%	24.0%	10.5%	100.0%	38.5%	0.0%	0.0%	12.1%
Total		Count	7	81	3	25	19	1	13	7	1	157
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G23- Inclusion and accepted as being a part of the University – cohort

			Course start date: October 2016	February 2017	June 2017	October 2017	Total
Inclusion and accepted as being a part of the University	Most influential	Count	21	30	9	53	113
		% within Course start date:	53.8%	75.0%	81.8%	58.9%	62.8%
	Less influential	Count	11	10	2	32	55
		% within Course start date:	28.2%	25.0%	18.2%	35.6%	30.6%
	Least influential	Count	7	0	0	5	12
		% within Course start date:	17.9%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	6.7%
Total		Count	39	40	11	90	180
		% within Course start date:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G24- Inclusion and accepted as being a part of the University - programme

			Course_name: Foundation Business	Foundation Healthcare	Foundation Computing	BA Business	BA Healthcare Top-Up	BSc Computing	LLB Law	BA Psychology and Criminology	BA Business Top-Up	BA Healthcare	Total
Inclusion and accepted as being a part of the University	Most influential	Count	12	26	0	11	22	8	5	2	10	17	113
		%	52.2%	70.3%	0.0%	91.7%	78.6%	50.0%	45.5%	100.0%	62.5%	51.5%	62.8%
	Less influential	Count	9	10	2	1	5	6	4	0	6	12	55
		%	39.1%	27.0%	100.0%	8.3%	17.9%	37.5%	36.4%	0.0%	37.5%	36.4%	30.6%
	Least influential	Count	2	1	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	4	12
		%	8.7%	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	12.5%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	12.1%	6.7%
Total		Count	23	37	2	12	28	16	11	2	16	33	180
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G25 - Inclusion and accepted as being a part of the University- your household status

			Please state your household status:				
			Homeowner	Rented	Living with Parents	Prefer not to say	Total
Inclusion and accepted as being a part of the University	Most influential	Count	5	74	18	16	113
		% within Please state your household status:	41.7%	70.5%	58.1%	50.0%	62.8%
	Less influential	Count	6	27	12	10	55
		% within Please state your household status:	50.0%	25.7%	38.7%	31.3%	30.6%
	Least influential	Count	1	4	1	6	12
		% within Please state your household status:	8.3%	3.8%	3.2%	18.8%	6.7%
Total		Count	12	105	31	32	180
		% within Please state your household status:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G26 - Participation and potential views being listened to – gender

			Please state your gender:			
			Male	Female	Prefer not to say	Total
Participation and potential views being listened to	Most influential	Count	31	62	2	95
		% within Please state your gender:	46.3%	64.6%	18.2%	54.6%
	Less influential	Count	18	18	4	40
		% within Please state your gender:	26.9%	18.8%	36.4%	23.0%
	Least influential	Count	18	16	5	39
		% within Please state your gender:	26.9%	16.7%	45.5%	22.4%
Total		Count	67	96	11	174
		% within Please state your gender:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G27 - Participation and potential views being listened to - age group

			Please state your age group:				Total
			18-30	31-50	51 and above	Prefer not to say	
Participation and potential views being listened to	Most influential	Count	30	49	12	4	95
		% within Please state your age group:	50.8%	66.2%	52.2%	22.2%	54.6%
	Less influential	Count	14	15	4	7	40
		% within Please state your age group:	23.7%	20.3%	17.4%	38.9%	23.0%
	Least influential	Count	15	10	7	7	39
		% within Please state your age group:	25.4%	13.5%	30.4%	38.9%	22.4%
Total		Count	59	74	23	18	174
		% within Please state your age group:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G28 - Participation and potential views being listened to - household status

			Please state your household status:				Total
			Homeowner	Rented	Living with Parents	Prefer not to say	
Participation and potential views being listened to	Most influential	Count	6	64	15	10	95
		% within Please state your household status:	54.5%	60.4%	53.6%	34.5%	54.6%
	Less influential	Count	3	22	6	9	40
		% within Please state your household status:	27.3%	20.8%	21.4%	31.0%	23.0%
	Least influential	Count	2	20	7	10	39
		% within Please state your household status:	18.2%	18.9%	25.0%	34.5%	22.4%
Total		Count	11	106	28	29	174
		% within Please state your household status:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table G29- Enhancement of skills - marital status

			Please state your marital status:					
			Single	Married	Divorced	Living together	Prefer not to say	Total
Enhancement of skills	Most influential	Count	61	38	3	14	20	136
		% within Please state your marital status:	80.3%	76.0%	50.0%	93.3%	57.1%	74.7%
	Less influential	Count	12	9	3	1	12	37
		% within Please state your marital status:	15.8%	18.0%	50.0%	6.7%	34.3%	20.3%
	Least influential	Count	3	3	0	0	3	9
		% within Please state your marital status:	3.9%	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.6%	4.9%
Total		Count	76	50	6	15	35	182
		% within Please state your marital status:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Appendix H Corporate brand data set

Table H1 - Reputable programmes and courses - ethnicity

			Ethnicity									
			Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	Black or Black British – African	Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	White	Other Black Background	Asian or Asian British – Indian	Other Asian Background	Black or Black British – Caribbean	Mixed - White and Black African	Total
Reputable programmes and courses	Most influential	Count	7	60	3	13	18	1	13	5	0	120
		%	70.0%	70.6%	60.0%	38.2%	81.8%	100.0%	52.0%	62.5%	0.0%	62.8%
	Less influential	Count	3	20	0	14	4	0	10	3	0	54
		%	30.0%	23.5%	0.0%	41.2%	18.2%	0.0%	40.0%	37.5%	0.0%	28.3%
	Least influential	Count	0	5	2	7	0	0	2	0	1	17
		%	0.0%	5.9%	40.0%	20.6%	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%	100.0%	8.9%
Total		Count	10	85	5	34	22	1	25	8	1	191
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

H2 - Good reputation of the University - age group

			Please state your age group:				
			18-30	31-50	51 and above	Prefer not to say	Total
Good reputation of the University	Most influential	Count	34	69	23	26	152
		% within Please state your age group:	41.5%	71.1%	67.6%	81.3%	62.0%
	Less influential	Count	42	26	10	5	83
		% within Please state your age group:	51.2%	26.8%	29.4%	15.6%	33.9%
	Least influential	Count	6	2	1	1	10
		% within Please state your age group:	7.3%	2.1%	2.9%	3.1%	4.1%
Total		Count	82	97	34	32	245
		% within Please state your age group:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

H3 - Good reputation of the University - marital status

			Please state your marital status:					
			Single	Married	Divorced	Living together	Prefer not to say	Total
Good reputation of the University	Most influential	Count	58	47	5	5	37	152
		% within Please state your marital status:	57.4%	72.3%	50.0%	50.0%	62.7%	62.0%
	Less influential	Count	38	17	5	3	20	83
		% within Please state your marital status:	37.6%	26.2%	50.0%	30.0%	33.9%	33.9%
	Least influential	Count	5	1	0	2	2	10
		% within Please state your marital status:	5.0%	1.5%	0.0%	20.0%	3.4%	4.1%
Total		Count	101	65	10	10	59	245
		% within Please state your marital status:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

H4 - Good reputation of the University - household status

			Please state your household status:				
			Homeowner	Rented	Living with Parents	Prefer not to say	Total
Good reputation of the University	Most influential	Count	13	86	17	36	152
		% within Please state your household status:	76.5%	59.7%	56.7%	66.7%	62.0%
	Less influential	Count	3	54	11	15	83
		% within Please state your household status:	17.6%	37.5%	36.7%	27.8%	33.9%
	Least influential	Count	1	4	2	3	10
		% within Please state your household status:	5.9%	2.8%	6.7%	5.6%	4.1%
Total		Count	17	144	30	54	245
		% within Please state your household status:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table H5- Good reputation of the University - ethnicity

			Ethnicity									Total
			Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	Black or Black British – African	Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	White	Other Black Background	Asian or Asian British – Indian	Other Asian Background	Black or Black British – Caribbean	Mixed - White and Black African	
Good reputation of the University	Most influential	Count	7	59	0	8	9	0	11	5	0	99
		% within Ethnicity	87.5%	76.6%	0.0%	26.7%	69.2%	0.0%	61.1%	62.5%	0.0%	62.7%
	Less influential	Count	1	17	2	19	1	1	7	3	1	52
		% within Ethnicity	12.5%	22.1%	100.0%	63.3%	7.7%	100.0%	38.9%	37.5%	100.0%	32.9%
	Least influential	Count	0	1	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	7
		% within Ethnicity	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	10.0%	23.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.4%
Total		Count	8	77	2	30	13	1	18	8	1	158
		% within Ethnicity	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0 %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0 %

Table H6 - Good University image - ethnicity

			Ethnicity									Total
			Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	Black or Black British – African	Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	White	Other Black Background	Asian or Asian British – Indian	Other Asian Background	Black or Black British – Caribbean	Mixed - White and Black African	
Good University image	Most influential	Count	5	57	4	10	6	0	10	6	0	98
		% within Ethnicity	83.3%	77.0%	80.0%	35.7%	46.2%	0.0%	62.5%	85.7%	0.0%	64.9%
	Less influential	Count	1	15	1	14	5	0	4	0	1	41
		% within Ethnicity	16.7%	20.3%	20.0%	50.0%	38.5%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	100.0%	27.2%
	Least influential	Count	0	2	0	4	2	1	2	1	0	12
		% within Ethnicity	0.0%	2.7%	0.0%	14.3%	15.4%	100.0%	12.5%	14.3%	0.0%	7.9%
Total		Count	6	74	5	28	13	1	16	7	1	151
		% within Ethnicity	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0 %

H7 - Recommended by others as a good university brand – programme

			Course_name										
			Foundation Business	Foundation Healthcare	Foundation Computing	BA Business	BA Healthcare Top-Up	BSc Computing	LLB Law	BA Psychology and Criminology	BA Business Top-Up	BA Healthcare	Total
Recommended by others as a good university brand	Most influential	Count	15	25	0	5	24	6	4	1	10	12	102
		%	37.5%	49.0%	0.0%	26.3%	68.6%	24.0%	25.0%	33.3%	52.6%	34.3%	41.6%
	Less influential	Count	19	16	1	7	11	15	8	1	7	20	105
		%	47.5%	31.4%	50.0%	36.8%	31.4%	60.0%	50.0%	33.3%	36.8%	57.1%	42.9%
	Least influential	Count	6	10	1	7	0	4	4	1	2	3	38
		%	15.0%	19.6%	50.0%	36.8%	0.0%	16.0%	25.0%	33.3%	10.5%	8.6%	15.5%
Total		Count	40	51	2	19	35	25	16	3	19	35	245
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table H8 - Recommended by others as a good university brand – campus

			Which campus are you studying at?					
			Ealing, London	Tower Hill, London	Holborn, London	Birmingham	Manchester	Total
Recommended by others as a good university brand	Most influential	Count	12	78	6	2	4	102
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	31.6%	47.9%	35.3%	13.3%	33.3%	41.6%
	Less influential	Count	22	64	8	9	2	105
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	57.9%	39.3%	47.1%	60.0%	16.7%	42.9%
	Least influential	Count	4	21	3	4	6	38
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	10.5%	12.9%	17.6%	26.7%	50.0%	15.5%
Total		Count	38	163	17	15	12	245
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Appendix I Marketing communications data set

Table I1- Cohort

			Course start date: October 2016	February 2017	June 2017	October 2017	Total
How did you find out about the University? Please select the most appropriate option by placing a tick next to it?	Through the website of the University	Count	9	19	10	65	103
		% within Course start date:	13.2%	21.3%	45.5%	20.4%	20.7%
	Radio advertisement	Count	0	0	0	1	1
		% within Course start date:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%
	Bus advertisements	Count	0	0	1	1	2
		% within Course start date:	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	0.3%	0.4%
	Newspaper advertisements	Count	0	4	0	13	17
		% within Course start date:	0.0%	4.5%	0.0%	4.1%	3.4%
	Prospectuses	Count	0	2	0	1	3
		% within Course start date:	0.0%	2.2%	0.0%	0.3%	0.6%
	Open days	Count	3	5	1	24	33
		% within Course start date:	4.4%	5.6%	4.5%	7.5%	6.6%
	From walking into the University.	Count	0	1	0	7	8
		% within Course start date:	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	2.2%	1.6%
	Career Fairs	Count	4	9	2	14	29
		% within Course start date:	5.9%	10.1%	9.1%	4.4%	5.8%
	Social media, for example Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.	Count	9	8	2	34	53
		% within Course start date:	13.2%	9.0%	9.1%	10.7%	10.7%
	Recommendations from others	Count	34	34	6	124	198
		% within Course start date:	50.0%	38.2%	27.3%	39.0%	39.8%
	Search engines	Count	9	7	0	34	50
		% within Course start date:	13.2%	7.9%	0.0%	10.7%	10.1%
Total		Count	68	89	22	318	497
		% within Course start date:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table I2- programme

			Course_name											
			Foundation Business	Foundation Healthcare	Foundation Computing	BA Business	BA Healthcare Top-Up	BSc Computing	LLB Law	BA Psychology and Criminology	BA Business Top-Up	BA Healthcare	MBA	Total
How did you find out about the University? Please select the most appropriate option by placing a tick next to it?	Through the website of the University	Count	25	21	0	6	8	7	10	2	15	7	2	103
		%	29.1%	17.9%	0.0%	15.4%	13.6%	18.4%	41.7%	28.6%	30.0%	9.7%	100.0%	20.7%
	Radio advertisement	Count	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
		%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
	Bus advertisements	Count	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
		%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
	Newspaper advertisements	Count	4	5	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	3	0	17
		%	4.7%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	7.9%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	4.2%	0.0%	3.4%
	Prospectuses	Count	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
		%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	1.7%	0.0%	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
	Open days	Count	1	8	0	5	5	4	1	2	4	3	0	33
		%	1.2%	6.8%	0.0%	12.8%	8.5%	10.5%	4.2%	28.6%	8.0%	4.2%	0.0%	6.6%
	From walking into the University.	Count	2	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	1	0	8
		%	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	1.4%	0.0%	1.6%
	Career Fairs	Count	5	8	0	3	2	2	0	0	4	5	0	29
		%	5.8%	6.8%	0.0%	7.7%	3.4%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	6.9%	0.0%	5.8%
	Social media, for example Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.	Count	13	11	0	3	4	3	2	1	4	12	0	53
		%	15.1%	9.4%	0.0%	7.7%	6.8%	7.9%	8.3%	14.3%	8.0%	16.7%	0.0%	10.7%
	Recommendations from others	Count	29	56	1	14	31	10	7	2	19	29	0	198
		%	33.7%	47.9%	33.3%	35.9%	52.5%	26.3%	29.2%	28.6%	38.0%	40.3%	0.0%	39.8%
	Search engines	Count	7	8	1	7	4	7	3	0	1	12	0	50
		%	8.1%	6.8%	33.3%	17.9%	6.8%	18.4%	12.5%	0.0%	2.0%	16.7%	0.0%	10.1%
		Count	86	117	3	39	59	38	24	7	50	72	2	497
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table I3 – campus

			Which campus are you studying at?					
			Ealing, London	Tower Hill, London	Holborn, London	Birmingham	Manchester	Total
How did you find out about the University? Please select the most appropriate option by placing a tick next to it?	Through the website of the University	Count	9	70	12	6	6	103
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	11.0%	20.9%	32.4%	25.0%	31.6%	20.7%
	Radio advertisement	Count	0	0	1	0	0	1
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
	Bus advertisements	Count	0	2	0	0	0	2
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
	Newspaper advertisements	Count	1	14	1	0	1	17
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	1.2%	4.2%	2.7%	0.0%	5.3%	3.4%
	Prospectuses	Count	0	3	0	0	0	3
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
	Open days	Count	8	23	2	0	0	33
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	9.8%	6.9%	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%	6.6%
	From walking into the University.	Count	2	6	0	0	0	8
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	2.4%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%
	Career Fairs	Count	3	25	0	1	0	29
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	3.7%	7.5%	0.0%	4.2%	0.0%	5.8%
	Social media, for example Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.	Count	13	29	4	4	3	53
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	15.9%	8.7%	10.8%	16.7%	15.8%	10.7%
	Recommendations from others	Count	39	132	10	11	6	198
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	47.6%	39.4%	27.0%	45.8%	31.6%	39.8%
	Search engines	Count	7	31	7	2	3	50
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	8.5%	9.3%	18.9%	8.3%	15.8%	10.1%
Total		Count	82	335	37	24	19	497
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table I4-gender

			Please state your gender:			
			Male	Female	Prefer not to say	Total
How did you find out about the University? Please select the most appropriate option by placing a tick next to it?	Through the website of the University	Count	35	49	19	103
		%	20.5%	18.4%	31.7%	20.7%
	Radio advertisement	Count	1	0	0	1
		%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
	Bus advertisements	Count	1	0	1	2
		%	0.6%	0.0%	1.7%	0.4%
	Newspaper advertisements	Count	8	8	1	17
		%	4.7%	3.0%	1.7%	3.4%
	Prospectuses	Count	2	1	0	3
		%	1.2%	0.4%	0.0%	0.6%
	Open days	Count	11	18	4	33
		%:	6.4%	6.8%	6.7%	6.6%
	From walking into the University.	Count	7	1	0	8
		%	4.1%	0.4%	0.0%	1.6%
	Career Fairs	Count	5	23	1	29
		%:	2.9%	8.6%	1.7%	5.8%
	Social media, for example Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.	Count	14	31	8	53
		%	8.2%	11.7%	13.3%	10.7%
	Recommendations from others	Count	69	109	20	198
		%	40.4%	41.0%	33.3%	39.8%
	Search engines	Count	18	26	6	50
		% within Please state your gender:	10.5%	9.8%	10.0%	10.1%
Total		Count	171	266	60	497
		%:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table I5 – age

			Please state your age group:				
			18-30	31-50	51 and above	Prefer not to say	Total
How did you find out about the University? Please select the most appropriate option by placing a tick next to it?	Through the website of the University	Count	33	38	10	22	103
		% within Please state your age group:	22.8%	17.4%	18.5%	27.5%	20.7%
	Radio advertisement	Count	0	1	0	0	1
		% within Please state your age group:	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
	Bus advertisements	Count	1	0	0	1	2
		% within Please state your age group:	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	0.4%
	Newspaper advertisements	Count	2	13	2	0	17
		% within Please state your age group:	1.4%	6.0%	3.7%	0.0%	3.4%
	Prospectuses	Count	2	1	0	0	3
		% within Please state your age group:	1.4%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
	Open days	Count	16	10	2	5	33
		% within Please state your age group:	11.0%	4.6%	3.7%	6.3%	6.6%
	From walking into the University.	Count	5	1	2	0	8
		% within Please state your age group:	3.4%	0.5%	3.7%	0.0%	1.6%
	Career Fairs	Count	10	16	1	2	29
		% within Please state your age group:	6.9%	7.3%	1.9%	2.5%	5.8%
	Social media, for example Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.	Count	21	22	1	9	53
		% within Please state your age group:	14.5%	10.1%	1.9%	11.3%	10.7%
	Recommendations from others	Count	30	99	35	34	198
		% within Please state your age group:	20.7%	45.4%	64.8%	42.5%	39.8%
	Search engines	Count	25	17	1	7	50
		% within Please state your age group:	17.2%	7.8%	1.9%	8.8%	10.1%
Total		Count	145	218	54	80	497
		% within Please state your age group:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table I6 – household status

			Please state your household status:				
			Homeowner	Rented	Living with Parents	Prefer not to say	Total
How did you find out about the University? Please select the most appropriate option by placing a tick next to it?	Through the website of the University	Count	1	63	11	28	103
		% within Please state your household status:	3.0%	22.6%	18.3%	22.4%	20.7%
	Radio advertisement	Count	0	1	0	0	1
		% within Please state your household status:	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
	Bus advertisements	Count	0	0	2	0	2
		% within Please state your household status:	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	0.4%
	Newspaper advertisements	Count	0	12	1	4	17
		% within Please state your household status:	0.0%	4.3%	1.7%	3.2%	3.4%
	Prospectuses	Count	0	2	1	0	3
		% within Please state your household status:	0.0%	0.7%	1.7%	0.0%	0.6%
	Open days	Count	0	14	7	12	33
		% within Please state your household status:	0.0%	5.0%	11.7%	9.6%	6.6%
	From walking into the University.	Count	1	3	2	2	8
		% within Please state your household status:	3.0%	1.1%	3.3%	1.6%	1.6%
	Career Fairs	Count	2	12	8	7	29
		% within Please state your household status:	6.1%	4.3%	13.3%	5.6%	5.8%
	Social media, for example Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.	Count	6	27	3	17	53
		% within Please state your household status:	18.2%	9.7%	5.0%	13.6%	10.7%
	Recommendations from others	Count	20	119	14	45	198
		your household status:	60.6%	42.7%	23.3%	36.0%	39.8%
	Search engines	Count	3	26	11	10	50
		your household status:	9.1%	9.3%	18.3%	8.0%	10.1%
Total		Count	33	279	60	125	497
		% within Please state your household status:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table I7 – marital status

			Please state your marital status:						
			Single	Married	Divorced	Civil partnership	Living together	Prefer not to say	Total
How did you find out about the University? Please select the most appropriate option by placing a tick next to it?	Through the website of the University	Count	39	27	3	0	3	31	103
		% within Please state your marital status:	21.2%	19.7%	17.6%	0.0%	15.0%	22.8%	20.7%
	Radio advertisement	Count	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
		% within Please state your marital status:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.2%
	Bus advertisements	Count	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
		% within Please state your marital status:	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
	Newspaper advertisements	Count	3	10	0	0	4	0	17
		% within Please state your marital status:	1.6%	7.3%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	3.4%
	Prospectuses	Count	1	0	0	0	0	2	3
		% within Please state your marital status:	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.6%
	Open days	Count	6	10	0	3	1	13	33
		% within Please state your marital status:	3.3%	7.3%	0.0%	100.0%	5.0%	9.6%	6.6%
	From walking into the University.	Count	6	1	0	0	1	0	8
		% within Please state your marital status:	3.3%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	0.0%	1.6%
	Career Fairs	Count	8	11	0	0	0	10	29
		% within Please state your marital status:	4.3%	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.4%	5.8%
	Social media, for example Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.	Count	23	12	1	0	0	17	53
		% within Please state your marital status:	12.5%	8.8%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	10.7%
	Recommendations from others	Count	71	56	13	0	8	50	198
		% within Please state your marital status:	38.6%	40.9%	76.5%	0.0%	40.0%	36.8%	39.8%
	Search engines	Count	25	10	0	0	2	13	50
		% within Please state your marital status:	13.6%	7.3%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	9.6%	10.1%
Total		Count	184	137	17	3	20	136	497

Table I8 –ethnicity

			Ethnicity									
			Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	Black or Black British – African	Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	White	Other Black Background	Asian or Asian British – Indian	Other Asian Background	Black or Black British – Caribbean	Mixed - White and Black African	Total
How did you find out about the University? Please select the most appropriate option by placing a tick next to it?	Through the website of the University	Count	2	30	1	10	1	0	9	1	1	55
		% within Ethnicity	16.7%	19.9%	16.7%	24.4%	3.1%	0.0%	29.0%	7.7%	100.0%	19.0%
	Bus advertisements	Count	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
		% within Ethnicity	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%
	Newspaper advertisements	Count	0	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	7
		% within Ethnicity	0.0%	4.0%	0.0%	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%
	Prospectuses	Count	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
		% within Ethnicity	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%
	Open days	Count	0	12	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	18
		% within Ethnicity	0.0%	7.9%	0.0%	4.9%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.2%
	From walking into the University.	Count	0	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
		% within Ethnicity	0.0%	4.0%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%
	Career Fairs	Count	0	6	0	1	2	1	4	1	0	15
		% within Ethnicity	0.0%	4.0%	0.0%	2.4%	6.3%	50.0%	12.9%	7.7%	0.0%	5.2%
	Social media, for example Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.	Count	1	14	0	11	0	0	2	1	0	29
		% within Ethnicity	8.3%	9.3%	0.0%	26.8%	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%	7.7%	0.0%	10.0%
	Recommendations from others	Count	8	68	0	11	22	0	11	5	0	125
		% within Ethnicity	66.7%	45.0%	0.0%	26.8%	68.8%	0.0%	35.5%	38.5%	0.0%	43.3%
	Search engines	Count	1	9	3	4	1	1	4	5	0	28
		% within Ethnicity	8.3%	6.0%	50.0%	9.8%	3.1%	50.0%	12.9%	38.5%	0.0%	9.7%
Total		Count	12	151	6	41	32	2	31	13	1	289
		% within Ethnicity	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Appendix J Blended pedagogy data set

Table J1 -cohort

			Course start date: October 2016	February 2017	June 2017	October 2017	Total
Is blended traditional academic or vocational and work based?	Traditional academic	Count	20	25	6	76	127
		% within Course start date:	34.5%	33.3%	28.6%	29.6%	30.9%
	Vocational and work based	Count	29	41	11	152	233
		% within Course start date:	50.0%	54.7%	52.4%	59.1%	56.7%
	Both	Count	9	9	4	29	51
		% within Course start date:	15.5%	12.0%	19.0%	11.3%	12.4%
Total		Count	58	75	21	257	411
		% within Course start date:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table J2 - Is blended traditional academic or vocational and work based - programmes

			Course_name: Foundation Business	Foundation Healthcare	Foundation Computing	BA Business	BA Healthcare Top-Up	BSc Computing	LLB Law	BA Psychology and Criminology	BA Business Top-Up	BA Healthcare	MBA	Total
Is blended traditional academic or vocational and work based?	Traditional academic	Count	21	25	2	9	13	13	5	2	10	27	0	127
		%	30.9%	28.4%	100.0%	29.0%	25.0%	36.1%	26.3%	33.3%	23.8%	40.9%	0.0%	30.9%
	Vocational and work based	Count	41	56	0	15	33	18	8	3	26	32	1	233
		%	60.3%	63.6%	0.0%	48.4%	63.5%	50.0%	42.1%	50.0%	61.9%	48.5%	100.0%	56.7%
	Both	Count	6	7	0	7	6	5	6	1	6	7	0	51
		%	8.8%	8.0%	0.0%	22.6%	11.5%	13.9%	31.6%	16.7%	14.3%	10.6%	0.0%	12.4%
Total		Count	68	88	2	31	52	36	19	6	42	66	1	411
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table J3-Is blended traditional academic or vocational and work based - ethnicity

			Ethnicity									Total
			Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	Black or Black British – African	Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	White	Other Black Background	Asian or Asian British – Indian	Other Asian Background	Black or Black British – Caribbean	Mixed - White and Black African	
Is blended traditional academic or vocational and work based?	Traditional academic	Count	2	46	1	18	12	1	1	8	1	90
		% within Ethnicity	20.0%	34.3%	25.0%	54.5%	42.9%	50.0%	4.0%	72.7%	100.0%	36.3%
	Vocational and work based	Count	4	73	3	8	15	1	16	3	0	123
		% within Ethnicity	40.0%	54.5%	75.0%	24.2%	53.6%	50.0%	64.0%	27.3%	0.0%	49.6%
	Both	Count	4	15	0	7	1	0	8	0	0	35
		% within Ethnicity	40.0%	11.2%	0.0%	21.2%	3.6%	0.0%	32.0%	0.0%	0.0%	14.1%
Total		Count	10	134	4	33	28	2	25	11	1	248
		% within Ethnicity	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table J4 - Is blended traditional academic or vocational and work based - campus

			Which campus are you studying at?					Total
			Ealing, London	Tower Hill, London	Holborn, London	Birmingham	Manchester	
Is blended traditional academic or vocational and work based?	Traditional academic	Count	12	95	11	4	5	127
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	17.1%	34.2%	36.7%	21.1%	35.7%	30.9%
	Vocational and work based	Count	47	153	15	13	5	233
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	67.1%	55.0%	50.0%	68.4%	35.7%	56.7%
	Both	Count	11	30	4	2	4	51
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	15.7%	10.8%	13.3%	10.5%	28.6%	12.4%
Total		Count	70	278	30	19	14	411
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table J5 - Is blended traditional academic or vocational and work based- gender

			Please state your gender:			
			Male	Female	Prefer not to say	Total
Is blended traditional academic or vocational and work based?	Traditional academic	Count	43	69	15	127
		% within Please state your gender:	29.3%	30.4%	40.5%	30.9%
	Vocational and work based	Count	81	132	20	233
		% within Please state your gender:	55.1%	58.1%	54.1%	56.7%
	Both	Count	23	26	2	51
		% within Please state your gender:	15.6%	11.5%	5.4%	12.4%
Total		Count	147	227	37	411
		% within Please state your gender:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table J6 - Is blended traditional academic or vocational and work based - age group

			Please state your age group:				
			18-30	31-50	51 and above	Prefer not to say	Total
Is blended traditional academic or vocational and work based?	Traditional academic	Count	40	61	10	16	127
		% within Please state your age group:	33.6%	32.4%	21.7%	27.6%	30.9%
	Vocational and work based	Count	65	95	33	40	233
		% within Please state your age group:	54.6%	50.5%	71.7%	69.0%	56.7%
	Both	Count	14	32	3	2	51
		% within Please state your age group:	11.8%	17.0%	6.5%	3.4%	12.4%
Total		Count	119	188	46	58	411
		% within Please state your age group:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Appendix K Student outcomes data set

Table K1 - What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete - cohort

			Course start date: October 2016	February 2017	June 2017	October 2017	Total
What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete?	Advance employment and career opportunities	Count	50	63	16	225	354
		% within Course start date:	78.1%	76.8%	72.7%	75.0%	75.6%
	A good degree	Count	11	16	5	70	102
		% within Course start date:	17.2%	19.5%	22.7%	23.3%	21.8%
	Better quality of life	Count	3	3	1	5	12
		% within Course start date:	4.7%	3.7%	4.5%	1.7%	2.6%
Total		Count	64	82	22	300	468
		% within Course start date:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table K2 - What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete – programme

			Course_name: Foundation Business	Foundation Healthcare	Foundation Computing	BA Business	BA Healthcare Top-Up	BSc Computing	LLB Law	BA Psychology and Criminology	BA Business Top-Up	BA Healthcare	MBA	Total
What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete?	Advance employment and career opportunities	Count	60	73	1	26	45	35	16	4	39	54	1	354
		%	76.9%	67.0%	33.3%	78.8%	80.4%	92.1%	66.7%	57.1%	78.0%	79.4%	50.0%	75.6%
	A good degree	Count	18	33	1	6	9	3	6	2	10	13	1	102
		%	23.1%	30.3%	33.3%	18.2%	16.1%	7.9%	25.0%	28.6%	20.0%	19.1%	50.0%	21.8%
	Better quality of life	Count	0	3	1	1	2	0	2	1	1	1	0	12
		%	0.0%	2.8%	33.3%	3.0%	3.6%	0.0%	8.3%	14.3%	2.0%	1.5%	0.0%	2.6%
Total		Count	78	109	3	33	56	38	24	7	50	68	2	468
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table K3 - What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete - campus

			Which campus are you studying at?					
			Ealing, London	Tower Hill, London	Holborn, London	Birmingham	Manchester	Total
What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete?	Advance employment and career opportunities	Count	61	245	21	15	12	354
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	77.2%	77.8%	56.8%	75.0%	70.6%	75.6%
	A good degree	Count	16	63	15	4	4	102
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	20.3%	20.0%	40.5%	20.0%	23.5%	21.8%
	Better quality of life	Count	2	7	1	1	1	12
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	2.5%	2.2%	2.7%	5.0%	5.9%	2.6%
Total		Count	79	315	37	20	17	468
		% within Which campus are you studying at?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table K4 - What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete- gender

			Please state your gender:			
			Male	Female	Prefer not to say	Total
What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete?	Advance employment and career opportunities	Count	123	194	37	354
		% within Please state your gender:	74.5%	76.1%	77.1%	75.6%
	A good degree	Count	42	51	9	102
		% within Please state your gender:	25.5%	20.0%	18.8%	21.8%
	Better quality of life	Count	0	10	2	12
		% within Please state your gender:	0.0%	3.9%	4.2%	2.6%
Total		Count	165	255	48	468
		% within Please state your gender:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table K5 - What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete- age group

			Please state your age group:				Total
			18-30	31-50	51 and above	Prefer not to say	
What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete?	Advance employment and career opportunities	Count	101	161	37	55	354
		% within Please state your age group:	72.1%	77.4%	71.2%	80.9%	75.6%
	A good degree	Count	32	43	15	12	102
		% within Please state your age group:	22.9%	20.7%	28.8%	17.6%	21.8%
	Better quality of life	Count	7	4	0	1	12
		% within Please state your age group:	5.0%	1.9%	0.0%	1.5%	2.6%
Total		Count	140	208	52	68	468
		% within Please state your age group:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table K6 - What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete - household status

			Please state your household status:				Total
			Homeowner	Rented	Living with Parents	Prefer not to say	
What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete?	Advance employment and career opportunities	Count	21	203	44	86	354
		% within Please state your household status:	75.0%	74.9%	75.9%	77.5%	75.6%
	A good degree	Count	7	61	11	23	102
		% within Please state your household status:	25.0%	22.5%	19.0%	20.7%	21.8%
	Better quality of life	Count	0	7	3	2	12
		% within Please state your household status:	0.0%	2.6%	5.2%	1.8%	2.6%
Total		Count	28	271	58	111	468
		% within Please state your household status:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table K7 - What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete - marital status

			Please state your marital status:						
			Single	Married	Divorced	Civil partnership	Living together	Prefer not to say	Total
What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete?	Advance employment and career opportunities	Count	133	95	12	1	15	98	354
		% within Please state your marital status:	74.7%	73.1%	70.6%	50.0%	78.9%	80.3%	75.6%
	A good degree	Count	40	32	5	1	3	21	102
		% within Please state your marital status:	22.5%	24.6%	29.4%	50.0%	15.8%	17.2%	21.8%
	Better quality of life	Count	5	3	0	0	1	3	12
		% within Please state your marital status:	2.8%	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	2.5%	2.6%
Total		Count	178	130	17	2	19	122	468
		% within Please state your marital status:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table K8 - What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete - ethnicity

			Ethnicity									
			Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	Black or Black British – African	Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	White	Other Black Background	Asian or Asian British – Indian	Other Asian Background	Black or Black British – Caribbean	Mixed - White and Black African	Total
What do you hope to achieve once your course is complete?	Advance employment and career opportunities	Count	9	109	5	25	23	2	23	10	1	207
		% within Ethnicity	75.0%	74.1%	83.3%	62.5%	76.7%	100.0%	76.7%	83.3%	100.0%	73.9%
	A good degree	Count	3	38	1	10	6	0	7	2	0	67
		% within Ethnicity	25.0%	25.9%	16.7%	25.0%	20.0%	0.0%	23.3%	16.7%	0.0%	23.9%
	Better quality of life	Count	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	6
		% within Ethnicity	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%
Total		Count	12	147	6	40	30	2	30	12	1	280
		% within Ethnicity	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Appendix L Thematic analysis from the interviews

Q	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Change to fees and cap for unis'	Widening participation and value add	Change to fees and affordability	Collapse of pt funding	Flexible	Marketing savvy	Traditionals moving online	Fee rise = debt
	Traditionals investing in buildings – commercial model	Commercialisation and marketisation, More at the selling stage	Un-vetted access to loans	People can't study – jobs and family life- this is a gap on the market	Lower fees	Work with agencies	Emotional appeal	Cost/benefit analysis
	The sector has become more aware of the consumer	Access to loans and fees	Regulations and the Education Act	Cost conscious		Students as consumers	BL - flexible	Spend more time over making the right HE decision
	Traditionals area aware of the market but still prefer the UK cycle of UCAS	Volume game is not sustainable it is about quality of the brand		HE Bill – more providers		More competition	BL – filling a gap in the market	
	XXXX also uses UCAS to a small extent.	Less cost, less debt		Regulatory standards made easier to enter the market		Invest in marketing CPI CPA		
	Debt -£50K and more cost conscious students.	Cost or recruitment going up due to agencies and Google Ads		Credibility in terms of HE 'provider' – lack of understanding		Advisory consultative		

	Maintenance loan is offered to the majority.	HE providers are more niche, and commercial and therefore can deal with the customer		More competition = more quality		A lot of money invested to fail		
	False promises on career opportunities in the market.	Students are customer-partners and have a stake in their education		BL flexible		Education is high risk in cost to the student		
	Student debt is an issue in terms of value add and end employment journey	Problem students think they are entitled to a degree		Fee rise to £9250 people are more conscious.		Market focused		
	Students question the value of the degree	HE Bill – student charters						
	Knowledge if free and available these days, employer skills development aren't -niche	Apprenticeships are likely to hasten gradual tipping points of prospective students leading to applied quals						
	Push in admissions and this is immoral	Noise of poor value, high paid VCs, debt burden						

	when the HEI doesn't match the student's needs	and devaluation of degrees floating around.						
Cost & Fees Change in Market and Sector Student-Led Use of Agencies & UCAS Employer Involvement Flexible								
I2								
	BL gave access to loans and faster turnaround of students. Less dropouts.	Commercial reasons BL is more straight forward, faster progression	Progression and attrition on DL is low and therefore BL works well with the face to face interaction	Flexibility. Online first with offline support	BL offers flexibility	DL was quite difficult to cut through due to the market and competition	Flexible approach	BL gives flexibility enabling students to autonomously learn
	The DL span of time was not cost effective the pedagogy needed to change. Student loans were a push for this	Less confident people need more structure and support. BL offered this on and offline		Enhancement of VLE.	Fits with work and home life	Flexible delivery. – only 2 days per week	Fits with work and childcare	Mix of both on and offline learning
		Technology enabled us to deliver this		More study centres.	Encourages engagement and the use of technology	DL materials first with the support of BL.	Some students are technologically challenged. The face to face approach gives	Can work at the same time as learning

								support	
		Student centricity borrowed from customer service.				BL has introduced a different tone, moving away from uni jargon to more student focused language			Support for those who have been out of education for a number of years
		Applied learning and behavioural outcomes.							
Cost & Commercial		Flexibility	Institutional Support						
I3									
	Students are taught skills and graduate attributes that will help them in employment	BL students are more challenging. Integrated online and offline.	First students have online materials with some face to face experience. This is the opposite of traditionals	BL offers both online materials and offline support	A mix of both online interactive content and offline lectures	The idea for BL was an inter-departmental focus.	Online materials with the value of face to face contact	On campus and teaching online. The on campus joins the student together
	We want to develop more problem solving learning	Academically challenged, we need to give them more support	BL is not working because students don't understand it.			Market research has been limited to date and the courses presented are quite traditional Students will		

						now form feedback when developing future courses		
	Students attend 12 hours per week over 2 days so they continue to work. This also fits with dropping off children	We have introduced admissions tests now to ensure they are right for the course.	The calibre of student has not lived up to expectations					
		Plan to use external agency to coach and motivate students	Students think they are on an accelerated degree of 2 days only. They don't engage with the online content.					
		Prospects don't understand BL.						
Employer Focused Online and Offline Two Days Weak Students								
I4								
	SMT - power	Employers – power	QAA, HESA – power	IT and Academic - advisory	N/A	Inter-departmental approach-	Employers - power	BL team and student support – advisory and

						advisory		information
	Government – information and keep informed	Collaboration and inter-department – advisory	Professional bodies – power and advisory	Employers - power		QAA – power	Alumni - advisory	Student voice - power
	Employers – power	SMT- power	Student voice- power	Professional bodies, e.g. GCHQ.		Student voice – power	Professional bodies – power and advisory	
	Academic team – advisory	Professional bodies – power and advisory						
		Student voice- power						
		Engaged with specialist in coaching skills for students.						
Internal Employers Governing Bodies Professional Bodies Student Voice Consultants								
I5								
	3-4 segments were identified in quarter 3 2015	Constrained career striver Practical upskiller Disengaged learner Digital achievers	Practical upskillers Disengaged learners	1600 adults Looked at demographic, psychographic and geographic situation in relation to HE access	Career strivers Practical upskillers Disengaged learners	Attitudinal research undertaken		Did not focus on UCAS as only a new brand was introduced
			Mistake not to go after school	Career striver Practical upskillers		Career strivers Practical upskillers		18-25 year olds looking for a different mode

			leavers	Disengaged learners		Disengaged learners		of study
				Should have targeted school leavers and apprenticeship market				35 years with children and a job
				19% of adults are interested in HE but needs cannot be met by traditionals. CS primary group.				2% relocate otherwise the remainder select based on geographic location
Constrained Career Strivers Practical Upskillers Disengaged Learners Digital Achiever UCAS								
I6								
	Ongoing review	No formal review yet. We want to process all applicants through a series of questions so we have 80% confidence that we have met the target segments	Need to narrow and redefine what these segments mean. E.g. practical upskillers are not at a management level and are entering without management	We need to review to ensure we are getting the students we are targeting and if not which elements of the media are not working for us and why are we getting other targets.	We segment now based on the time of the year and those segments who have previously applied. Oct – disengaged learners and college	Segment the segments further. Overlay the products to segments. E.g. data experts are they the career strivers? Are healthcare students the practical upskillers. Do we offer our Access courses to	We conduct thematic reviews after cohorts. We constantly review.	As we are becoming more known we are starting to widen participation and reach out to 18-25 year olds.

			experience		leavers April – target MBA	disengaged learners?		
	Now all students complete a motivational profile at induction (3 week duration). Must demonstrate motivation to succeed this is particularly useful to us when trying to retain the disengaged learners	We are going to be targeting more college leavers through UCAS.	Plan is to target school leavers. Target lower 6th.	We will be targeting more savvy 18 year olds	Through ongoing review campaigns can be altered, for instance changing a visual online to a female in her 30s to attract 30-40 year old women. This was supported with the use of data analytics	Need to nurture some segments and hold their hands, for example, disengaged learners.	Induction needed to change and this happened quickly.	
	Introduced admissions tests for our targets to make sure they are academically eligible. We will be turning away	Thematic review and segmentation review every 2-3 years.		We have an online tool. 10 golden questions this will place students in terms of demographics				

	15-20% of applicants			and attitudes towards learning				
Ongoing Review Review & Evaluate Current Segments Target School & College Leavers Admissions Tests								
I7								
	Segmentation strategy was used to target messages on the website. #Do it differently. This is my library. This is my lecture theatre.	Three stream recruitment – 1. UCAS used by 5%. Agent recruitment used by 50%. Direct recruitment.	We take people other universities won't.	We want people to search for us – top of the funnel.	All involved in student recruitment have targets and are incentivised. This proves fruitful when targeting social media posting etc.	Nurture track.	The admissions team have been give rigorous training. This included working with the BL materials so they can get a better understanding of the student experience.	Marketing team will be the first contact.
	Academic screening process.	Plan marketing communications, e.g. early summer focus on broadcast advertisements.	Our recruitment is open access and if this is our reputation it is not a bad thing.	We used PPC but this was last chance for most and the end of the pipeline.	Dedicated emailing team who use soft and hard emailing techniques.	Website remarketing and commercial activities.	1-2-1 between admissions and the applicant then ensures the right course is being sold.	Lots of digital activity and more enquiries through the website.
		Pull model through attractive advertisements.		We give 1-2-1 support.	Digital adverts team who deal with PPC.	Marketing and admissions work very closely. Marketing focuses on awareness and		UCAS events, community events, walk in traffic. Bus advertisements, tube and metro

						then hands over to admission. They send 6 emails and nurture applicants.		advertising.	
		August/September for clearing we position on Google and pop ups.			Dedicated email team who hit prospects with hard and soft emails.	If an applicant is not ready they will get passed back to marketing and a softer approach.		Work with some recruitment agents but all applicants are still vetted by the admissions team first.	
		Once they show interest on the website we then pull them through gently with a Sunday morning newsletter.							
1-2-1 Support/Admissions Process Methods of Communication Recruitment Agents etc. Marketing Team Weak Students									
I8									
	It seems to work. We use language and tone that is comfortable to applicants.	We have a very neutral media theme and push across multiple channels.	The 2 days taught element has worked well with our recruitment.	We are trying to attract different preferences when people are searching online.	Students consider flexibility and come to use for that reason.	We want to segment the current segments further.	Constant review after each intake. A thematic review takes place.	Ongoing review.	
	We do appear to be a trusted	You might see a bus sign and then	More could be done to	We want people to come to use	Lower costs is also a motive	We think the upskillers are		Targeting against	

	brand.	if you Google the information will be in the same detail, colours and tone. This is building a relationship with the applicants.	understand student motivation.	rather than them coming to use for education and because we are cheap.	and flexible payment options.	after more bite size degrees rather than three year degrees		demographics.
	More could be don't to understand motives and motivation.	We are trying to build a pull model.		We want people to know us for solving a problem and being different.	They are comfortable that they get tutor support and a student support leader.	We need to use our segments and match them to the course.		Focus is on 18-25 year olds.
		We make people feel warm and fuzzy even if they are not in our buying space. We have moved away from last minute buying.		We have 1-2-1 advisors and we offer flexibility.	A lot of students are self-motivated and happy to learn in the BL way.			
Tone & Support Flexible & Costs Motivation Pull & New Segments								
I9								
	There is a need to understand the motives of students and identify their	Motives are more hygiene factors and costs, location and make-up of programme.	There is a mixed message in recruitment as the	We have moved from PPC to wanting people to search for us initially. We	It is effective we start with a soft approach and move to	We have a protocol to ensure students are supported through the	Admissions talks students through the process to ensure they have chosen the right	We vet applications and interview students to ensure they are

	motivations for wanting to learn with us.		advisors are incentivised.	want people to come to us.	harder approaches as students are ready to sign up.	process.	course. It could be that distance is better than blended.	right for us and we are right for them.
	The website could be improved.	Recruitment allows for someone to be willing to engage.	Students are pointed in our direction and they don't make a rational decision.	We cannot be just a part of UCAS as we have four intakes. We are student led.	The students' main motive is the flexibility, low cost and flexible payment options.	Marketing and admissions work together to ensure we have a joined up approach for students.		
		We make students feel welcomed and this motivates them.	We make it too easy to apply.		Students are supported through the process and they are not on their own.			
			We need to create a piece of work on motives and motivation. For instance, do student perform a cost/benefit analysis?					
			We need to					

			make to the process harder to ensure we get the right people.					
More Research Needed	Improvements Needed	What Works Well						
I10								
	We use texting	Used big broadcast channels.	I think we have relied on agents to get known.	We had our unique campaign – to say we were flexible.	Facebook live.	We can do students stories and get students to be advocates for the Uni.	The use of advisors has worked well to coach students.	We have digital leads and applications.
	We did buy through Google but other methods are now being trialled	Outdoor – Metro and Evening Standard. Hitting those out of the city on their way to work.	We haven't got the penetration we need.	We kick off campaigns six months in advance as we have four intakes.	We use social media - Facebook as a bit of fun and engagement. E.g. Memes. We do lots of quizzes, 15 films a psychologist should watch.	Once we get on alumni we will use them.		We have third party agents.
	We hope to use WhatsApp and Facebook messenger.	Radio – hit the school runners and colleges during the day.		Focus on more above the line marketing, e.g. more video that tells a story.		Open days can be more planned. Parent tours by staff and students via the students.		We use UCAS, this is small but hoping to grow.

	We want to ask students what method they would prefer.			We are getting a new marketing tool that builds a picture to see what they have done to search for us.		A big driver is word of mouth.		Offline activity – bus, bus shelters, posters are difficult to measure, but might lead onto looking at Google and the website.
				Paid editorials in the Metro and Evening Standard.		We used buses and graffiti advertising but they were only effective in a tight geographic area.		Offline activity – Sept/Oct. Offline activity – March, April and August, e.g. radio adverts. 17th August more offline activity during clearing.
				Native Advertising		PPC is still working well.		We intend to have more open days – Sept/Oct and Jan ready for UCAS applications.
				Radio didn't really work so we are looking to change this to a more				We are looking to build an outreach strategy to schools and

				interview style or advertorial.				colleges.
+ Methods - Methods Recommendations Strategy								
I11								
	Typically students look for unis 12 months before making a decision at this point we need to know their motivations to bring them through the funnel.	We need to support students through our non-traditional culture and teach them resilience.	We need to be clearer about our message and who we want to attract.	We need to focus on refer a friend more.	We react to changing trends and needs of the audience. For example, we get a lot of enquires through Facebook and Twitter.	Offline we have cut through 8% national recognition of the brand.	N/A	We need to develop a young audience who are career motivated.
	We no longer should be buying students through Google a couple of weeks before they make their final decision.	We need to focus on giving students power through apprenticeships.		We also need to continue with one to one support through the process.		We need to focus on outreach programmes with schools and colleges and we need to run with the 16,17 and 18 year old treadmill.		We should look at school and college leavers but be different than traditionals and look for those who seek employment.
		PCC increasingly costly. Brand and career orientation growing in importance.		We need to focus on content, videos and campuses.		We need to show imagery and buzz of a campus.		We need to develop out corporate internship and apprenticeships.

Target Stop Doing Recommendations								
I12								
	N/A	We need to be coaching students and teaching them self-resilience. This coupled with reflection will lead to their success in life.	N/A	Keeping an eye of the competition.	N/A	N/A	We need a better sense of fit and population of students to understand who our students are.	Eventually I think we will grow our professional post graduate market.
		These two attributes need to be entwined in pedagogy and the learning model. We can give students personal belief.		Biggest barrier to enrolment is lack of quality and credibility.				
		The marketplace has to realise people's potential.						
Pedagogic Enhancements Potential Market Competition More Work on Segments Brand								

Appendix M Extracts from the interviews

As per the request from the HEP ethics committee providing full transcripts for all interview participants is not permitted due to commercially sensitive information. The following are extracts from all participants supporting the analysis in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. The extracts identify areas of interest for consideration within this research and the future

Participant A –Executive Management has an oversight of corporate development and strategy.

“Em, what’s happened in the last couple of years in the market is that the press, subsequently the Government saw the debt and now individuals are starting to understand what the deal is going to university. Em, that in a traditional university there is typically a £50-£60K debt incurred, and I forgot to mention a change a couple of years ago whereby the maintenance grant became the maintenance loan and was pretty much offered to everybody. I think there is still some sort of limit on parental income versus access to that loan, but it’s offered more widely whereas the grant was fairly limited. Students now incur the fee loan debt and they incur the maintenance debt, and they incur interest whilst they study so typically £50-£60K is quite typical. There are lots of examples of students being promised the earth in terms of what the course will deliver in terms of career opportunities, em, and in a lot of cases, particularly in the North, I think, there are more cases where students go to university, come back home with a debt and pretty much have the same lifestyle and opportunities that they would have had, em, three years earlier. So the return on investment and the benefits of going to university versus the debts are being questioned by certain elements of society. I think students go away to university with high expectations and promises universities have made at admissions stage and prospectuses etc. and they undertake the course and come back home and their ability to progress in their chosen career is little developed as a result of going to university and having a £60K debt.”

“I’m not convinced traditional courses are preparing the students for careers because they’re still traditional in the sense that they still are non-science, non-legal and non-professional courses. They are still lecture/seminar type courses that, are knowledge based, they are supposedly a certain amount of skills based but I've not seen any material that's changed over the last 12 years there, and they have not done what we have done by the blended learning programme which is to build in graduate attributes going forward. Knowledge is available for free these days and it becomes more and more available in various different formats. Believing the knowledge is an issue and universities take care of this. Actual knowledge is freely available. So if someone was to study a generic degree in business or whatever, em, the student will be looking to put those skills into practice and this is what employers are looking for. This is what we are hoping to achieve. That's what will differentiate us in the future."

"Completion of motivational profiling. They start and then have a three week induction and they have to complete an online part of that and they have to attend and engage and so on and so forth, they obviously need to have their finance sorted. We will be turning away around 15-20% I guess who are not academically eligible to begin. I guess they don't engage sufficiently or they don't demonstrate motivation to succeed. One of the things I am keen to do going forward is to develop this motivation profile. In fact the psychology team and some externals are looking at this now. So we become the first university that em assuming that someone has passed the academic requirements screens on motivation because I believe and there is a lot of academic research out there that ability is not a forerunner to future success in studies or career. In fact having limited success in ability and combined with high level motivation creates far more success."

Participant B –Executive Management has an oversight of corporate development and strategy.

"I think this sector is still at the selling stage. it's like people are just dropping their requirements and sort of trading volume for quality I think. Em so it's a slightly lengthy way of saying that the traditional sector is becoming more commercial and marketised it seems to be a volume game. And actually I don't think that is very sustainable and we know lots of institutions are in murky waters financially and I think if you are at the very top you don't have to discount, but, if you are in the middle and bottom end it is a race to the bottom and that is a risk area. I think from our perspective, the noise that it creates and the conversation it creates in the marketplace probably serves us quite well. Em, in one sense, because there is a big conversation that considered on grade entry and value of degrees. So this taps in well incisively with us to have an institution that is affordable and brings you out with less debt, that has a slightly different shape, I think it is always hard to cut through that noise, but when we do we are doing so with a message that is quite bang on the money in terms of perhaps what people need to hear."

"I believe that we should view students as customer-partners. They should be engaging in and shaping their own educational experience. Em it is categorically important that students are not just buying their degrees. They are paying to partner with us on an educational experience. I think that where that term lies. I think a certain segment of UK students, middles class white kids have a certain sense of entitlement and an expectation that they pay the money, take the debt and pop out the other end. Erm I think that is changing and those types of students are changing when they get their wake-up call that this isn't a breeze and you do have to work hard for it and it is not given on a plate. And particularly in our model you don't get spoon fed you really have to engage with the process. I think they can be nosier and stampy footed because they have paid for this. Perhaps erm, so yes, probably in parallel with the sector, learning to treat students a bit more like customers, perhaps students are ascertaining themselves about more like customers. I think there is something important about the contract between the student and institution and the way in which they engage. Actually I think that is something that we and the sector could do better. There has been talk in the HE Bill to develop charters with students. We have developed these, but have we pushed them enough, probably not."

"BL has been a steep learning curve for sure. Erm, I think what were we have learnt is that the type of student attracted to BL are far more academically needy than we expected. We based our expectations on our DL marketplace, who are actually quite competent and self-starting, and able to work autonomously. Our BL market is younger, less academically confident and we have really had to work hard to bring them through."

"I would really like to find a way to deliver awareness and self-resilience to students because actually aside from any knowledge transfer or skills or capabilities those two things make for the most successful. We all hear of graduates going into the work place and not workplace ready and a lot of this is down to behaviour. It might be that student support works with academics I'd like to deliver resilience coaching and erm self-awareness in parallel with the course. Given the graduate attributes are linked to our values I guess these two could be integrated into the pedagogy and learning model."

Participant C – Executive Management, has an oversight of corporate development, with an expertise in pedagogic development.

"We look at the world through an online lens so the idea of going from that to a completely conventional type of delivery is not something as an organisation that we would be comfortable with. So we start with the fact that all students have online materials and ilearn content and what we are looking at is finding a way to give some kind of face to face experience within the context of giving them the experience of online content. So we give them the experience of online and then classroom based. This is the opposite of what more people do. Most people come at it through a classroom based lens and then try to convert it to an online programme. So we are at the different end of the telescope. That is where the BL idea has come from."

"I think if you talk to most students they will think that what we offered was an accelerated degree in terms of reducing the days only two days a week instead of studying full time. I'm not sure that was the attraction but that is where I would put my money. So students thought it was a two day experience even though we were clear it wasn't. A consequence of that is, a significant number of students work full time. We've got a whole range of problems. Many students don't do a lot of work outside those two days. When you look at the statistics online not many people are accessing the online content. So people aren't doing huge amounts of work so we are suffering that way."

"Personally I think having an open access reputation will not be a bad thing. Someone has to have this. You know I just think you have to put your hand up and I think when someone says your progression rates are rubbish you have to say "yeah they are rubbish accept it, but we are giving people opportunities and we are not costing very much." I think if students are incurring a £50K debt and are failing in the last semester then yes you need to be beaten with a stick. Giving students a semester to see if it works is going to cost, but in the grand scheme of things that is nothing as long as you are not damaging the students in anyway. You are giving them an opportunity, personally I think there is nothing wrong with that and I think that is a good place to be."

"If we made it harder to enter then the market and numbers would drop. Erm, I personally don't have a problem with making it more difficult to apply and we are starting to do that and there is an acceptance by the organisation that we have to start putting barriers up and making it more difficult. In my simple world if you can't be bothered to fill in a form and do an online test how are you going to cope with a BL degree? In a sense some of these motivation test seems to be right."

Participant D – Middle Management, is an expert in marketing strategy.

"Under a provider there needs to be a bit more understanding about what it is, credibility issues, is xxxx as credible as other universities? It's still kind of unknown people don't understand the difference between a private university and a public one. Actually they are the same in terms of their quality. In that way it's good but it is also more competitive. Probably there is a risk that we could get lost in the noise, now, we are quite unique, we can say that we are different and you know student-led and everything whereas in the future it might not be the case. Because we are not a traditional university and I think with them there is a lot of the teaching for example em quite research led in institutions. Em, so some people might say they are not thinking of student outcomes, its more about the quality of research and em academic standing which is a good thing as well but for some people if they just want an education that they can actually do it because they have families. We are responding to that and our learning model and the way we are delivering courses is focused around what students need in that sense it is looking at the market and joining and thinking about what they want and need."

"So one group was named Career Strivers – quite a broad age group, 20-50, and people who are in a job and in a career, full time work but the obviously want more. Perhaps might not have got a degree the first time around. Might be at a stage in their career where they can't get any further without a degree. Other people were overtaking them and again they haven't got a lot of money, they are money conscious, and they really want the outcome of the degree. We had another group another group called the Practical Up-skillers. Predominately female in employment who are more likely to be 30+ who have families and they were looking for em and they were looking for skills cos their jobs might have quite low skills but they really want to progress and do better. So normally they might not have achieved when they were younger, they might not have been the brightest towards achieving. But they are and now they think it is their time to learn and do better. Perhaps they have had families young and now they have more time for themselves. They want to progress that way. In London we found another group called Disengaged Learners and they were a bit younger, more like 18-25. As it sounds they were disengaged with learning. Again they possibly weren't the brightest at school, they possibly weren't on the treadmill to traditional university, like it was not for them for some reason. But again they probably have a standard job but again could do better."

"I've noticed in London one thing we've used is paid editorials in the Evening Standard and the Metro. They're free papers, almost on every single underground or bus across London so they are quite good in terms of reach. Em, and we have these full pages articles that we fill and it's like native advertising so it looks like an article but it's not, it's written by a journalist. We can obviously suggest the messaging and they can write it for us. And they've been really good because it gives more information about xxxx."

"When someone applies they get a personal admissions advisor and I don't think a lot of universities do that."

Participant E – Operations Management, is an expert in marketing communications.

"I think what I have read about blended learning is that it is really up and coming and even when I talk to my friends who work in other universities they say that is something they want to consider in the future. There are other people who have read about this concept of blended learning. I think it is the need of the hour really because it's not everybody can quit their jobs and just like cut ties and blended learning gives them flexibility. And also more active learning, it encourages them which I am really excited about it's like, erm a whole new concept where you watch lectures online and go to the classes and instead of unlike traditional unis where you go and listen to a lecturer or a talk you can actually spend time in the class in discussions with the tutor. So it's more of I think, it is more productive then the traditional uni."

"One was Constrained Career Strivers which is people who don't want to quit their jobs but want to get a degree or want to progress in their careers or they want to upskill and gain a degree probably a Masters. And second was Practical Upskillers who are looking mainly to gain their confidence, get a degree and probably have a lag in their education and they want to start doing something mainly. I know the segment, erm, mainly a group of females was considered, it could be that they were at home looking after their families and they want to start a career again. So that is that segment and the third is the Disengaged Learners so the segment is erm, err a group of students, so who at the age of 16 or college and have lost their motivation to study or they had some other priorities and they decided not to pursue a degree. But they have now considered getting a degree or they probably feel they have wasted time or they don't fit into the proper uni crowd anymore, so these are our main segments that we drive from all of the research the other teams did."

"The main motive that students consider is the flexibility our lower costs and flexible payment options. The success that they are going to get, so even though we are online or blended we are, most of our courses are accredited you know that they are as good as any other traditional university. Also they are assured they will get support not just from the tutor, but also they get al.located a student support leader so he or she will be with you through thick and thin. It gives them reassurance cos they know they are not going to be on their own."

Participant F – Senior Management, is an expert in marketing strategy.

"Erm, so I think universities have become more savvy about using marketing experts. And it might not be education focused. So again when I started here the word marketing was not heavily banded about. Erm, it was very much admissions, not mentioning the 'S' word because we do admissions we don't do sales. And there was this feeling of I guess people should walk through our door and be ready to work with us. Rather than this more outreach treating students as consumers. This has been negative for some of our university colleagues, erm but very much people though will walk through the door now and choose from a range of universities. Because of the marketisation of the sector it is a lot more competitive. A lot more focus about getting the students in and I guess that is tied to student loans as well, so more students, the more money the university will get.”

“We don’t use the word consumer much at all. We only use it in marketing. So that we still have students and we have a very advisory, consultative sell. Erm it is a discussion we need. They are going to commit to use for five years so its time and money invested. Although it is marketised it is a very different proposition we have with students than other products. And at the end they could actually fail their product and not many products fail. It’s a lot of money to pay and at the end not get anything. It’s a strange product in that sense. It is high risk.”

“The best way for admissions to describe BL is that it is 2 days a week. So they can fit it into their lives. One of the things we have done is move away from university terminology, is move away from the jargon and focus on our tone of voice in everyday language and try to declutter our language. Yeah one of the things admissions use is you can do DL, but got to campus 2 days a week too. They don’t know what BL is.”

“We have struggled with is Disengaged Learner. I think we have struggled to reach those because they are disengaged with education. Also in terms of their progression. I think we are more comfortable with Career Strivers because that fits more with our DL model. Erm, I’m not sure we have the product quite right with our Upskillers. We are trying to do Access courses but I get the feeling that Upskillers are wanting shorter bite size degrees rather than three years. I think the next phase, we kind of picked up, what was it, Digital Achievers, we picked up on those. People liking to learn online.”

“We use a lot of commercial activities, for example, when someone goes on our website we do remarketing. So we then come up on other pages. When someone fills out a form online they go into our email tracker. That will change to Whatsapp etc. You will get a welcome email and be put on a track based on behaviour, so if you are not wanting to study for a while you will be put on a soft nudge track, e.g. stories, we are here when you are ready. If you are looking for a course we wlll filter you to this and maybe once a week we will follow up and push to a call in and maybe sometimes encourage to enrol. At that point it will switch to the admissions team."

"Admissions have a protocol to get through 6 emails or calls. Once they understand what the person wants they will nurture them through the process. Once they have 1-2-1 the admissions will handle that. Marketing will send a nice email e.g. xxx has won an award. Ad-hoc at the moment but will be automated eventually. One email a month. Marketing and admissions work together so they don't step on each other's toes. We do this to check quality. Lots of integration. Again, actually I think that is one area where we are miles ahead."

"We can do students stories but the best way is to get them in front of students, so advocates it's going to be a big thing for us. Once we get an alumni then I don't think there are many things more powerful. Cos we can tell them how good the course is, but until they someone that has been through process and has achieved I think this is going to be very powerful. Open days we can reimagine that again. Other key things we can get the tutors to give a tour to the parents and the kids get led around by the student reps. Again that is one of the biggest drivers for them. Outreach programmes with schools. Showing those who are already 16 and 17 thinking this really isn't for me. At that point there are other options. We talk about the 16,17,18 treadmill."

"We are very good at bottom of the funnel marketing where people will search and we will pop up and people will maybe consider this. We are pretty good at harvesting those people. But above that it is hard to cut through especially when other universities are spending millions on advertising."

Participant G – Senior Management, is an expert in blended delivery.

"I think it is much more flexible, I mean I think that students say that to me frequently I came here so I only had to come in two times a week. I think knowing that they can theoretically drop their kids off in the morning and come and do class and at the end of the day that is important for a lot of our students. Em, some of our students work, they shouldn't full time, but some of them are balancing a lot. So I think that is the biggest reason why students come. It is that combination of sort of flexibility and, "I can build my life around not having to be in five days a week," and also having that support that is maybe not perceived to be available in distance learning."

"I worked with xxx who runs student recruitment to provide some training to his teams for what blended learning looks like and how is it different from distance and what kinds of things come up. His team requested a better understanding of what the materials were like. This is exactly the types of questions we want recruiters to ask so everyone on blended and distance recruitment have seen that."

"There are obvious conceptions about blended and only going to class two times a week. So I think the challenges from my perspective are how do you market effectively but also so the students don't solely think, "oh it's flexible I can still work a job. You know I can still work 30 hours a week and be on this course". When it's actually not and the course advisors are the first person to tell someone like, "no you can't do that". They tell people over and over again this is full time. Em, but the challenge is the students only hear we are only hear, "two days a week". I don't think our marketing is wrong it's just about preconceptions students have about how much it is going to take and how much work I need to do outside of the class."

"My impressions is I have worked a lot with the admissions teams in the US, and em no matter the quality of the school or how strict the standards are it was always about filling the seat. My impression with the admissions team is very different. One person actually said to me, "you know when I got the job it would be about convincing people to come here and I feel like I spend most of my time doing the opposite, sort of like trying to talk people through whether it is the right thing for them. She said it seems a little weird, but I spend a lot of time saying, well you might not be able to commit to this. You are telling me you have a new infant and you are working and I am telling you you don't have time for this." Em so I get the impression that they are ready to say that distance might be better and blended isn't right for them at the moment."

Participant H – Senior Management, is an expert in student recruitment.

"I think from my perspective sort of major changes, shifts and so on from being in recruitment seven years now in public and private have been the major challenges of creating awareness of HE and the changes really around fees being a key driver of it. As fees have gone up people have been more aware of, you know, what they are getting themselves into, understanding that they are investing in education and the debt that people are going to get in people are asking more questions of, em the content of courses. They've asked more questions about what are they getting for their money. What are the tutors like? What are their expertise? What's the facilities like? What other things are provided for? What are the online resources like?"

"The blended delivery is a mixture of on-campus/online teaching, em, and delivery so what the student will get will not only be on campus teaching, and I think the on campus side of things is to really join the students together. Em and give them the opportunity to have a face to talk to, do presentations and really work together in groups. Because again when they go out into industry and get a career they will have to work with other people so I think it not only teaches them people skills but it also gives them a network they can use too. The online version is similar to distance learning where they have their materials online, their lectures, additional learning etc. on ilearn. So the student gets the best of both worlds. We attract quite a few students currently working or they've got caring responsibilities and that sometimes is difficult for them to change and adjust. But they see the need to develop their own skills being an important factor for them. What this model allows them to do is be flexible study. It is still full time learning but it gives them the autonomy to spread their learning around so they can work and study in the evening and they can do it in the morning or their lunch break. The campus offers them an opportunity for them to have a place to go where they can seek information."

"We'd only just rebranded as well so the brand wasn't out there to attract so called UCAS students. So we started off more widening participation type students, em, and as we have sort of grown and gone through intake and intake we are slowly starting to build I would say the 18-25 year old segment group where they have generally just left college or school, they are coming straight into higher education, but, they're looking for a different model as such. Many of these younger students still want to work, em, and they have to work to either provide for their families or maybe even their kids. Em, so I think in terms of how our segment has changed we did start off with many of our students being over 35"

"Ok so from marketing to first contact we take them through the process. So, from a marketing point of view obviously we do a lot of stuff digitally so our website is one of our main sources of enquires and we obviously have an application form online and various forms of communication which gives people the opportunity to leave messages. What we generally find is that we get a lot of leads from the website. We've got teams in the centres who follow up the leads from our prospective enquirers and they help to answer as many questions as possible. So em, basically they will work with these leads and they wish to apply to the university they will take them through the process and make sure they have the relevant documents with an aim to get them an offer at the university at one of the centres. So that's one area we generate interest through the website. We obviously do a lot of events too, UCAS type events, community events with the aim, em to direct people to the website or even to the centres and we do get walk in traffic as well. So they may have seen an advert on a bus for example, they may have seen an example in the Metro or a tube station, either they'll use our phone number or fill out an enquiry form on our website."

"So I think I personally want to grow that segment, and you know I think that is through more investment through UCAS and schools' outreach. And that we get into schools and colleges and talk about the university and its differences, the differences between us and traditional universities. I think we will be able to draw those types of students over to us and that is definitely one of my top three in terms of something I would want to develop, a schools outreach team that would purely focus on the development of the university and building the brand and recruitment of students."

"XXXXX is looking after the corporate internships and apprenticeships type schemes and what we want to do is she is aware of schools work I am trying to do and we are trying to link together. We know that there are a number of students who would be really interesting in apprenticeships rather than just going to university, and whether we could link the two together. We are not quite there yet, but we know that there is an opportunity there, and we want to really join forces to make that work. Overall, I think we offer a great product at the moment and my focus is to make the right audience aware and I think over time as people become more and more aware of the university I think we will grow firstly and I think our student base will improve and also we will attract more professional type students, in particular postgraduate.”

Appendix N International Professional Development Association (IPDA)

Co-constructing mentoring and its use within a Higher Education Provider

NOVEMBER 26, 2018

Over the last five years I have found myself immersed in my PhD research. The focus of the research is to explore the changes in pedagogy at a case-study higher education provider (HEP). The HEP's shift in teaching has come about as a direct result of changes within the higher education sector. Adams (2016) argues that the government is encouraging 'challenger institutions' that offer alternative educational options. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) (2016) identifies current problems for new start-up institutions, which tend to face barriers with respect to establishing themselves in the higher education sector. Even though perceived entry barriers may be high, the Government continues to encourage competition and the establishment of more HEPs. This has happened as a consequence of neoliberal interventions in higher education. Coughlan (2018) draws attention to the development of 'accelerated' or 'commuter' degrees, whereby students can study in 'bite-sized' chunks whilst simultaneously continuing to work.

The private HEP selected for my case-study research originally focused on online education in a distance-learning environment. However, due to increased competition and the slow progression made by students through the course modules, the HEP made the commercial decision to venture into a blend of teaching both online and offline. This innovation was aimed at improving student numbers and progress. Essentially, this approach to pedagogy ‘flipped’ traditional teaching models. According to Lee and Park (2018) students involved in this flipped approach have the ability to prepare for lessons in advance in readiness for classroom seminars. This enables action-learning and problem-solving exercises within the classroom, thus extending students’ knowledge and work-based skills. The HEP’s model for this approach to Blended learning involves providing two days attendance at one of five study centres within the UK, together with the provision of full distance-learning content online. Many of the students consider the educational programmes to be ‘accelerated’ degrees and/or courses that allow for the flexibility that enables them to continue to work whilst studying. However, this is not exactly how the HEP’s academic management see Blended learning. They consider attendance in centres to be two days of seminar learning and expect the students to spend a considerable amount of time working with the online content in order to provide themselves with more in-depth knowledge. There appears to be slight confusion between the students’ and the HEP’s expectations of the programmes and the mode of Blended delivery. This is not surprising as the Blended model is so new to the University.

Similarly, from the number of in-depth interviews I conducted, the lack of understanding of the ‘Blended’ learning framework has also been identified as an issue for the tutors. There appears to be some confusion amongst certain members of the academic team as to what the Blended delivery model entails, even though part of their on-boarding training covers this issue. As a result, tutors often fail to signpost students effectively towards the online content. The Director of Blended learning at the time did however, address this problem, and one of the interview participants has indicated how the situation has improved. Despite this, from my observations I would suggest that there is still room for improvement. Many of the academic team are new to the HEP, and are currently teaching on modules within the study centres. I wanted therefore, to understand how the Blended learning delivery model could be firmly embedded into the tutors’ work-practice, and so I read a number of academic papers. One concept that stood out is referred to by Bryan and Carpenter (2008). They make reference to the notion of 'co-constructing mentoring activities'. This process enables the tutor to effectively communicate with his/her mentor, thus enabling development plans to be mutually created. This method, I believe, can address the issue of improving work-practice and knowledge in the HEP's programmes, in a more 'nurturing' and 'developmental' manner. Currently, the mentor may think s/he knows what development the tutor requires, but this could change over time. The concept of co-constructing, therefore, essentially attends to both party's expectations and interpretation of developmental needs. I suggest that co-constructing can make professional development easier, and that it can be approached in a more effective collaborative and collective manner. Open discussions can take place between the mentor and the tutor, identifying essential learning and development opportunities. Consequently, I suggest that the HEP considers undertaking further research, via 'participatory action research' in order to enable co-constructing to be introduced into its professional development activities. Trialling this method within the Blended learning environment addresses this current problem, develops tutoring skills, and could as professional development plans are being developed become the beginning of using such a technique throughout the entire University.

References

- Adams, R. (2016). Government may give start-up universities degree awarding powers. *The Guardian*, 16th May.
- BIS (Department of Business Innovation and Skills). (2016). *Success as a knowledge economy: Teaching excellence, social mobility and student choice.*London: HMSO
- Bryan, H., and Carpenter, C. (2008). Mentoring: a practice developed in community? *Journal of In-Service Education.* 34(1) pp. 47-59.
- Coughlan, S. (2018), Theresa May's university review will not scrap fees, Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-43106736, (Accessed 19 February 2018).
- Lee, M. K., and Park, B. K. (2018). Effects of flipped learning using online materials in a surgical nursing practicum: a pilot stratified group-randomized trial. *Healthcare Informatics Research*, 24 (1) pp. 69-78.

Author

Alison Watson
alison.watson@tees.ac.uk

http://ipda.org.uk/co-constructing-mentoring-and-its-use-within-a-higher-education-provider/