

# COMPARE

A professional approach to designing, pricing  
and managing university courses

**Opinionpanel**Research

Dedicated to understanding students *before*,  
*during* and *after* their time at university.

 The  
Knowledge  
Partnership

Marketing, strategy and communications for an educated world

**C**ourse  
**O**ptimisation for  
**M**arketing;  
**P**ortfolio  
**A**ssessment and  
**R**eview

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# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

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## COMPARe Course

“ Is there a quick way for me to access a comprehensive set of trend data on provision and admissions at the subject- and course-related level? ”

> see *SubjectView*, page 8

“ How can I get input from exactly the right kind of students in the design of my new course to ensure it really meets their needs? ”

> see *Proposition Builder*, page 9

“ We’ve designed the course. Is there a way of undertaking some quantitative testing to check that the course is going to ‘fly’ with our target market? ”

> see *Proposition Tester*, page 10

“ Do we set the course fees and the scholarship/bursary offer at the right level to attract the best students in sufficient numbers? ”

> see *Price Pitcher*, page 11

“ Addressing student demand is not the only concern - what opinions and ideas do our wider stakeholders have that could enhance our course designs? ”

> see *Stakeholder Consultations*, page 12

## COMPARE Portfolio

“ We know it is good practice to implement a periodic review of our complete portfolio of courses – either university-wide or school by school. How can we make this an inclusive and productive process with the buy-in of academics, and what indicators should we use to measure course success? ”

> see *Course Portfolio Review*, page 14

“ From a business and market appraisal perspective, just how effective are our new course development (NCD) processes? Are we using best practice to identify, conceptualise, evaluate and launch new courses? ”

> see *Market Assurance NCD Benchmarking*, page 18

“ Is there a simple way of identifying opportunities for extending our portfolio into areas of growing demand and of identifying the providers that are already really successful in those markets, so we can evaluate their offer in more detail? ”

> see *Portfolio Gap Analysis*, page 16

“ Some of our schools have developed lots of new award pathways and we may have too many courses/awards. How do we know when our course portfolio is too large – or too small? ”

> see *Portfolio Size Optimiser*, page 17

# INTRODUCING COMPARE

**“ One of the laws of portfolio management is to launch new products only into a growing market – and preferably one in which you can become a recognised leader. Sadly, in higher education too many new courses enter saturated markets because no one looked hard enough at the data or the competitors. ”**

Opinionpanel Research and the Knowledge Partnership have joined together to create COMPARE; the suite of services and tools aimed at helping academics and senior managers successfully launch and update courses and make informed choices about the main variables driving interest, enrolment and retention.

As each year passes, the task of steering the university through new course developments (NCD) and periodic portfolio review (PPR) becomes more challenging. Undergraduate applicants and their parents are increasingly demanding about the detail of courses – in the postgraduate market this has always been the case.

Courses are the main manifestation of a university's values and strengths in the eyes of the public and the media; they are the key driver of student satisfaction and critical to market differentiation in an arena where providers can appear to be very similar. And with increased fees, courses and income derived from the students enrolled on them are by far the major source of revenue for the majority of HEIs.

Increasing numbers of opportunities need to be evaluated and firm action taken for the courses that underperform. To do this, NCD and PPR must take account of the market and seek to align courses and ranges of programmes with student- and, where appropriate, employer needs – both in the UK and globally. When the market is consulted and the courses meet real demands, everybody wins. However, from outline approval through academic scrutiny and quality assurance, the ingredient that too often receives only moderate attention in NCD is the market perspective.

Of course, NCD will always be an academic-led process. But often the specialist skills and resources required to undertake a thorough market review are either not there or fully committed in other areas. However, failing to undertake a market assessment can be a very costly mistake. The wrong title, too many options that confuse the prospective students rather than connote choice, a course design that fails to appeal, a poor understanding of the probable early adopter profile – these are the main reasons why the majority of new and reconfigured programmes in the sector fail to launch to target. The stark evidence is that very few then recover; they limp on, despite not being truly viable, consuming a disproportionate amount of resource.

By using a mix of qualitative and quantitative market research and consultancy, COMPARE provides prospect and stakeholder input to course design and portfolio review at both the postgraduate and undergraduate levels. The service is totally independent, offering you a genuinely external perspective from two specialist agencies familiar with both commercial and higher education demands.

COMPARE lets you dovetail the market assurance process with the established education quality assurance processes to enable you to create courses and portfolios that are sustainable because they are both academically robust and responsive to external demand.

# OUR SERVICES

COMPARE comprises two main elements focused on course and portfolio development. Each includes tools and defined services helping you incorporate the external market perspective. Each can be quickly applied, but our approach is tailored to your specific needs.

## New Course Development

This comprises:

- **SubjectView** reports on market trends in each HE subject area
- **Proposition Builder** – brings prospective students into the course design and marketing process
- **Proposition Tester** establishes the relative attractiveness of each element in your proposed new course
- **Price Pitcher** helps you to get the fee levels right
- **Stakeholder Consultations** are customised to each client's needs.

These services will be of particular interest to deans and heads of department, heads of quality assurance, subject leaders, course leaders, marketing directors and university market researchers.

## Periodic Portfolio Review

This is made up of:

- **Periodic Course and Portfolio Review** delivers frameworks and support to enable a helicopter evaluation
- **Portfolio Gap Analysis** identifies attractive subject markets for you to consider entering
- **Portfolio Size Optimiser** allows you to consult with prospective students to find out exactly when your portfolios starts becoming too large
- **Market Assurance for New Course Development** evaluates and benchmarks your new course development practices.

These services will be of particular interest to the vice-chancellor, the PVC academic affairs, deans and marketing directors.



# SUBJECTVIEW

**“Is there a quick way for me to access a comprehensive set of trend data on provision and admissions at the subject- and course-related level?”**

## Short summary

Reports that provide a market overview for each of the 140+ higher education subject areas - identifying trends in provision, demand and competition. The highly accessible format supports new course evaluations and the development of sharper marketing plans for existing programmes or subject-based suites of courses.

## Delivery by

The Knowledge Partnership

## How does this service answer my questions?

SubjectView reports contain market intelligence starting with GCSE and A-level trends (Higher data for Scottish clients) through to undergraduate and postgraduate education and then summarising graduate destination and employment data.

Version 0.3 (launched in 2009) includes labour market data from the Annual Business Inquiry (e.g. training demand, employees, employers by sector/occupations) with UK and regional comparisons and HE enrolment trends at both UK and regional level at a granular level.

Reports are based on principal JACS codes (detailed subject descriptors) set in the context of the relevant subject group.

Reports can also include analysis for selected four-digit JACS codes within the chosen principal code. The table below provides an example.

International data locates the key markets for each subject and provides data against which realistic target enrolments can be created. It also identifies the most successful HEIs in terms of volume against which clients can benchmark.

SubjectView provides critical data for both academic pricing (to support published entry grade setting) and subject-level intelligence on tuition-fee sensitivity so that clients can prepare for fee setting in the future.

The reports also include unique evidence on the factors that drive choice/decision making in the subject area to guide marketing decisions.

## What will I get?

A detailed SubjectView report (up to 35 pages) containing charts, statistical data and commentary, which is supplied in digital format for multiple uses within the organisation. Data sources include HESA, UCAS, ABI, JQA, DIUS, league tables, Opinionpanel and the NSS.

New to SubjectView 2009:

- Annual Business Inquiry data
- National Student Survey data

## Extract from the JACS codes to show the depth of SubjectView reporting

Subject Group (context)	Principal Code (main content)	Four-digit Codes (optional additional extras)
Group M Law	(M2) Law by Topic	(M200) Law by topic
		(M210) Public law
		(M211) Criminal law
		(M221) Business & commercial law
		(M222) Contract law
		(M223) Property law
		(M224) Torts
		(M250) Legal Practice
		(M260) Medical law
		(M290) Law by topic not elsewhere classified

# PROPOSITION BUILDER

**“How can I get input from exactly the right kind of students in the design of my new course to ensure that it really meets their needs?”**

## Short summary

This qualitative approach allows you to get inside the minds of your prospective student market. Independently and expertly moderated online discussion groups are convened and the ensuing insight is used to help you build a compelling proposition.

## Delivery by

Opinionpanel Research

## How does this service answer my questions?

Successful new courses need to get so many ingredients right, including offering the right course content, course title, employability, course configuration (e.g. placement year or not?), assessment method and awards (e.g. BSc or BA?). Balancing the offering and communicating it effectively is no easy task.

Using in-depth qualitative research, Proposition Builder gives you absolute clarity on the student perspective, helping you to shape and communicate the course correctly.

## How does it work?

Respondents are carefully recruited based on your target students' demographics, academic status, subject and careers of interest, institution formerly (or currently) attended, etc. Each group is run online (so there are none of the typical geographical obstacles to recruiting participants) and moderated by two experienced researchers. Both postgraduate and undergraduate markets can be researched.

The research helps to develop and guide the thinking behind course propositions and show how emphasising particular course attributes will aid success. These importance factors from the prospective students' viewpoint can help define the terms of the next phase of research, the Proposition Tester.

Each pair of 90-minute groups is run by two trained moderators and includes discussion guide development, incentives, analysis, report-back and recommendations. Clients are encouraged to attend live groups.

## What will I get?

- Illustrated report of findings (normally 20–40 pages)
- Optional debrief presentation
- Live attendance admission to all groups (including your colleagues)
- Group transcripts/videos.

## How do online focus groups work?

At Opinionpanel we frequently run online groups

### The benefits of online qualitative research

- It is a mode young people are used to and encourages full, frank and honest responses – participants are more open and less likely to go with a majority view
- Participants can type simultaneously – everyone gets their say
- Online means geography is no barrier – for participants or the client. Makes for better recruitment and faster turnaround times

### Client participation

Opinionpanel prepares the discussion guide in conjunction with the client, who is then encouraged to join our groups as observers (they have full communication with the moderators). It's enjoyable and provides fascinating insight, and because it is online the client does not have to travel.

### Recruitment

Recruitment for most groups is run in-house by Opinionpanel using a three-stage process of online selection and screening, telephone confirmation and text reminders. There are normally eight or ten participants per group and most participants receive a £20-to-£30 incentive. 'No-show' rates are low.

# PROPOSITION TESTER

**“We’ve designed the course. Is there a way of undertaking some quantitative testing to check that the course is going to ‘fly’ with our target market?”**

## Short summary

Proposition Tester allows you to consult with a large number of prospective students to simply explain what’s on offer and quantitatively test which elements are most or least attractive – and to whom.

## Delivery by

Opinionpanel Research

## How does this service answer my questions?

We test a wide range of the options you are considering in your course design using a conjoint measurement technique. Questionnaires are based on various options you nominate in a selection of the following areas: course titles, course content, course configuration (e.g. placement year, course modules), course assessment, employability outcomes and degree award (e.g. BSc, BA).

Ranges of different options are presented to respondents as authentic ‘real-world shopping’ alternatives. Collectively, a dizzying range of possible scenarios get tested and ‘traded off’ against each other. However, each respondent rates only a relatively small range of options.

## How does conjoint measurement work?

Conjoint analysis requires respondents to make a series of trade-offs between various features or benefit options. The analysis of the trade-offs will reveal the relative importance of component attributes. In the proposed research, respondents are asked to make a choice between two different courses, each offering a different mix of ‘features’.

### Example

- Course 1 is called business studies, includes a placement year, offers: continual assessment, is fairly practical and is moderately well recognised by employers.

Typically, around 500 respondents would take part – final-year undergraduates and recent graduates for new post-graduate courses and pre-applicants, applicants and students recently enrolled for undergraduate courses. You get to select the universities you want them to have come from/be interested in.

The outcome shows the relative importance of each attribute and preferred options for each attribute. The technique helps respondents to go beyond stating ‘worthy’ or obvious preference options when being questioned about the elements of a course that most attract them.

The result? You know which course elements are most attractive and what combinations work best so you can effectively launch the programme and position it in the prospectus, on the web or via advertising.

## What will I get?

Results are supplied as a PowerPoint presentation (approx 15–20 slides), showing relative preferences and ideal package recommendations. Tables are also supplied.

- Course 2 is called management studies, has no placement, is more theoretical, offers continual assessment and is well recognised by employers.

Respondents run through a range of scenarios in which they are asked to state their preferences. The ensuing analysis shows the relative importance of each feature. If the only attribute being considered for change is the course title, the approach can be adapted to consider a wide range of names.

# PRICE PITCHER

**“How do we set the course fees and the scholarship/bursary offer at the right level to attract the best students in sufficient numbers?”**

## Short summary

Setting the right fee levels is absolutely critical to maximising revenue. Set fees too low and the university ends up selling itself short and missing out on vital revenue. It may also damage your reputation. Too high and demand will be depressed. Using the conjoint, ‘trade-off’ approach, we’ll find out how much the groups of students you want to target would be prepared to pay.

## Delivery by

Opinionpanel Research

## How does this service answer my questions?

This takes ‘Proposition Tester’ a stage further by adding price (course fees, scholarships and financial aid) to the equation. This product has immediate applicability for those developing new postgraduate courses but can also be used to optimise the efficacy of undergraduate financial support packages – rapidly becoming the largest budget assigned to attracting students.

The elements that this module is able to test in a ten minute questionnaire are: comparisons with offerings from

competitor universities, scholarships and bursaries (and other funding options), short course descriptions and, crucially, alternative fee levels.

Realistic price ranges are tested for clearly explained courses at your university and your competitor institutions (the client gets to nominate competitors). The comparisons are therefore based on Price 1 at University A or Price 1 at University B – which offers best value? Or Price 1 at University A versus Price 2 at University B? If time allows, course titles can also be added to the mix.

For postgraduate courses, we typically question those in their penultimate or final year at undergraduate level (or a recent graduate). All will have had to confirm their interest in post-graduate study in the target course area, ideally from a relatively narrow range of institutions. Sample permitting, we will question up to 500 respondents per survey, drawn from our Student Panel and Graduate Panel. To evaluate undergraduate courses, the sample is drawn from our Future Panel of potential applicants along with recently enrolled undergraduate students.

## What will I get?

Results are supplied as a PowerPoint presentation (approx. 15–20 slides), showing relative preferences and ideal package recommendations. Tables are also supplied.



# STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

**“Addressing student demand is not the only concern – what opinions and ideas do our wider stakeholders have that could enhance our course designs?”**

## Short summary

Graduate employers and other organisations, including your own alumni, international agents and staff in key feeder institutions, can deliver invaluable intelligence for shaping programme design, titles and other key variables. An inclusive process also helps to build support and relationships. Using online, telephone and in-depth personal interviews, we can independently engage the stakeholders and deliver valuable insights.

## What will I get?

This research is qualitative and results can be supplied as a PowerPoint presentation or a report. Findings are presented for each group engaged, with an integrative summary highlighting the major areas of consensus across and between groups and those where there are different interpretations/emphasis, and recommendations for action. It can often be possible to design the research to include non-course-development issues (e.g. image of client and competitors) without undermining the validity of the findings.

## Delivery by

The Knowledge Partnership

## How does this service answer my questions?

This is a bespoke service and is usually applied when the client has a number of programmes in the development or review phase.

For programmes with a clear vocational career focus, gaining independent feedback on concepts, options and employability components is an essential stage in successful development. Typically this involves some face-to-face interviews and then two-stage telephone interviewing with graduate employers and representatives of relevant organisations. For courses for which there is an intention to recruit international students we conduct research online with agents and the client's own international alumni (sampled by location and subject of degree). Where there are specific prerequisites for entry (e.g. a degree in history or A-level biology), we recommend discussing courses with the tutors for these in key feeder institutions as they have knowledge of the recruitment pipeline and their advocacy may make or break a new course. This service provides a broad perspective on proposals and allows clients to develop and package courses that best meet the needs and preferences of all your interest groups.

# COMPARE PORTFOLIO

It is increasingly common for universities and colleges to review their portfolio of programmes as part of corporate or faculty-level planning. In some cases this is undertaken on a rolling basis with several schools in each cycle. Not unreasonably, these reviews have typically focused on the core issues of teaching and learning, and are part of the continuous improvement philosophy of the sector.

But a market-based approach to portfolio review is now emerging, designed to ensure that the portfolio is configured to best meet the needs of a university's diverse stakeholders.

Research by The Knowledge Partnership suggests that in a mature market there has been significant proliferation of programmes and modules – so the ratio of FTEs to both

programmes and modules has declined. This suggests that the management of the portfolio has been suboptimal.

COMPARE Portfolio includes a suite of related services:

- Periodic Course and Portfolio Review
- Portfolio Gap Analysis (identifying market opportunities)
- Portfolio Size Optimiser
- Market Assurance NCD Benchmarking.

These services will be of particular interest to the vice-chancellor, the PVC academic affairs, deans and marketing directors.



# PERIODIC COURSE AND PORTFOLIO REVIEW

**“We know it is good practice to implement a periodic review of our complete portfolio of courses – either university-wide or school by school. How can we make this an inclusive and productive process with the buy-in of academics, and what indicators should we use to measure course success?”**

## Short summary

Periodic portfolio review (PPR) is becoming common practice in the HE sector as universities seek to optimise course portfolios, focussing on viable programmes that build reputation and play to institutional strengths. Because course development is usually a dispersed activity, the portfolio tends to grow in an ad hoc manner and proliferation results in the market not being able to see the wood for the trees. More can mean less.

On a periodic basis, universities or individual schools must take a helicopter evaluation to ensure that their courses are making a contribution – not just financially but to their wider mission and strategic objectives.

## Delivery by

The Knowledge Partnership

## How does this service answer my questions?

The Knowledge Partnership has extensive experience of working with HE providers to support periodic appraisals of the portfolio, and the following services can be provided:

**Designing the review process**, often working with the PVC or senior team. We can advise you on how to manage the process, its scope, reporting and action planning.

To support portfolio evaluation we have created the EMMaP Scorecard. This evaluates each programme against a set of metrics under the following headings:

- Economic
- Mission
- Market attractiveness
- Performance.

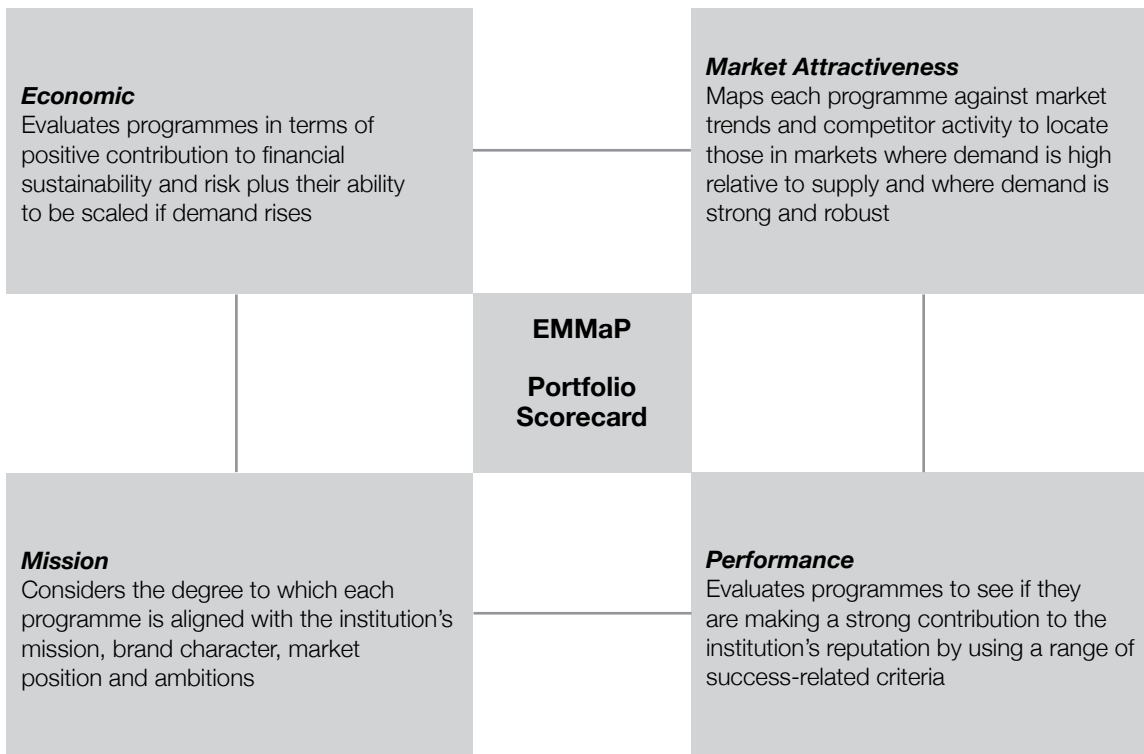
EMMaP is a balanced scorecard approach, emphasising that financial returns are not the only value that a programme delivers to the institution. It creates a consistent framework allowing all programmes to be compared on a like-for-like basis. EMMaP ensures the review is evidence-based but the metrics used are determined at the outset by the client from a menu provided. It enables the setting of baselines and the creation of targets for improvement.

**Being a critical adviser** for those implementing the review. We can become a member of the project review team, providing an independent informed perspective. We can also design the tools that you might use to involve the academic staff and colleagues in the academic departments, or provide them with training or support to enable them to make a full contribution to the review.

**Providing supporting evidence** (where there is a need for external data). It is typical for clients to be able to collect and present most of the data required to undertake a robust market/business-based portfolio review, but TKP can supplement this through synthesising other external evidence sources. We can also advise on how data can be best interpreted for review purposes.

## What will I get?

Consultancy-based advice, supplemented by frameworks and tools designed specifically for the HE environment. The programme of support is designed to leave a legacy so that the client is able to embed portfolio-review good practice. Clients have access to the EMMaP method, a composite approach derived from client good practices in Australasia and the UK. Clients can also access a training package that introduces staff to a range of methods used for portfolio review in other sectors. We have also created a spreadsheet-driven tool that brings these approaches to life and allows course teams to be guided through a self-assessment for their own programmes.



“ It makes sense to strategically review the courses and subjects we offer every two to three years because the pattern of student and employer demand changes, competitors launch new courses, the 14-19 curriculum moves on and our own corporate priorities change ”

# PORTFOLIO GAP ANALYSIS

**“Is there a simple way of identifying opportunities for extending our portfolio into areas of growing demand and of identifying the providers that are already really successful in those markets, so we can evaluate their offer in more detail?”**

## Short summary

“Is there a simple way of identifying opportunities for extending our portfolio into areas of growing demand and of identifying the providers that are already really successful in those markets, so we can evaluate their offer in more detail?”

- Locate those HE providers that have been most successful in these growth markets as a basis for further investigation and competitor analysis.
- Highlight growth areas that are not currently offered either by you or your primary competitors.
- Identify leakage – subjects that students from your core geographic area are opting for that you do not offer (particularly relevant for part-time provision).

## Delivery by

The Knowledge Partnership

## How does this service answer my questions?

Using published statistics, we have created detailed trend data for over 1,000 HE subjects mapped to JACS. This means we can report those subject areas that offer good opportunities based on the “achieved market”. This covers all modes and levels of study, and UK and international markets.

The analysis enables you to:

- Identify those subject areas with multi market potential (thus offering the chance to effectively to spread risk).

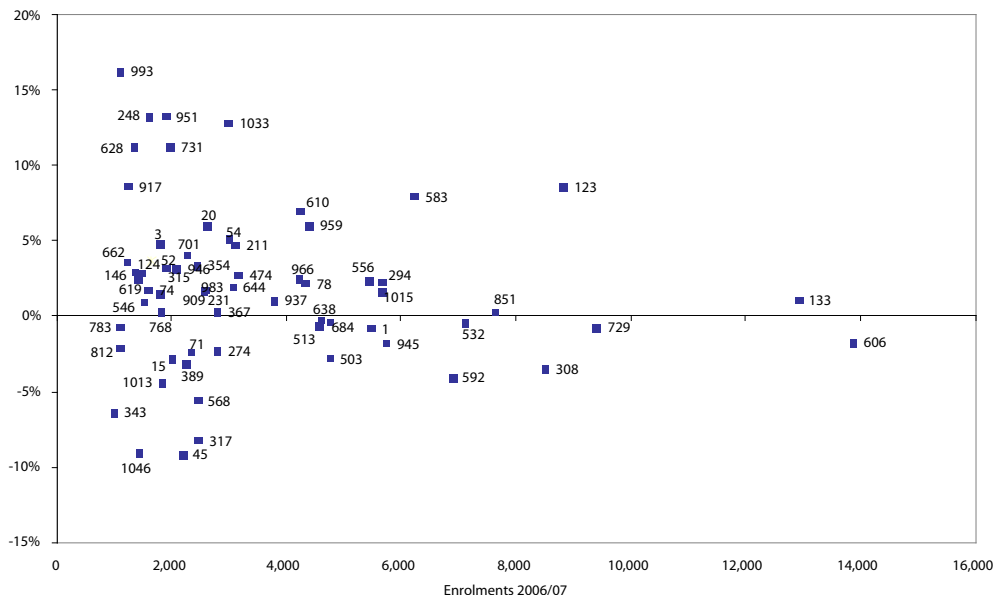
The Knowledge Partnership has also researched the main sources of successful ideas for new programmes as a basis for stimulating your academics and marketers to think about innovative provision.

## What will I get?

A report containing detailed tables and charts mapping the current portfolio against the market trends and opportunities and highlighting viable gaps.

An executive summary that shows the best opportunities – those that fit the brand mission and are not currently offered by your nominated competitor set.

Full-time Undergraduate UK Enrolments  
4 Digit JACS (1000+ Enrolments)



# PORTFOLIO SIZE OPTIMISER

**“Some of our schools have developed lots of new award pathways and we may have too many courses/awards. How do we know when our course portfolio is too large - or too small?”**

## Short summary

This research is designed to consult with your prospective students in order to find out the optimal portfolio size and range of courses offered by your department or school, including both established and possible new courses.

## Delivery by

Opinionpanel Research

## How does this service answer my questions?

The key questions addressed in this approach are:

- Which courses should we offer to maximise appeal?
- What is the optimum number of courses?
- What target is each course appealing to?

More specific questions relating to the subject area and the individual courses are included to help you understand the target group and guide development of the offer.

The approach is based on primary research with around 500

prospective students with the right academic backgrounds and interests, drawn from Opinionpanel's Future Panel, Student Panel and Graduate Panel, as appropriate. For undergraduate courses that will typically mean pre-applicant and applicant students, while for postgraduate courses it's typically penultimate or final-year students and recent graduates interested in postgraduate study in the target course area, ideally from target institutions.

Using an online questionnaire lasting up to ten minutes, developed in collaboration with the client, we will question students regarding the range of potential courses that could be offered, including the appeal of potential courses, preference and reasons and the appeal relative to courses offered by other institutions. At its core the questionnaire would employ the TURF approach (Total Unduplicated Reach and Frequency analysis).

## What will I get?

Results supplied as a PowerPoint presentation (approx. 20 slides), showing which portfolio of courses/titles maximises appeal and identifies key features of the target groups. Tables are also supplied.

## How does TURF analysis work?

TURF analysis, an acronym for "Total Unduplicated Reach and Frequency", is a type of statistical analysis used for providing estimates of market potential and devising optimal ways of meeting market demand.

TURF is used to determine what drivers motivate consumers to purchase a certain product. This in turn can help organisations determine which products/services to offer, and, just as importantly, what products not to make or variants and options to offer.

TURF analysis identifies the number of users reached and/or the frequency of usage of a particular product configured in a certain way.

For example, you are proposing to launch a suite of ten new MSc programmes in a business school but the TURF analysis might show the market will only enrol significantly on five - and that launching them all would only marginally increase your share but hugely increase your workload and administration costs.

So, the TURF algorithm identifies the optimal product line to maximise the total number of consumers who will purchase at least one product whilst minimising the chance of cannibalism within the portfolio. TURF, combined with your own analysis of (for example) overlapping application patterns and a review of student entry profiles and entry requirements, will give you a rounded picture of how to optimise the shape and breadth of your portfolio.

# MARKET ASSURANCE NCD BENCHMARKING

**“From a business and market appraisal perspective, just how effective are our NCD processes? Are we using best practice to identify, conceptualise, evaluate and launch new courses?”**

## Short summary

This “product” is delivered on a consultancy basis, so you are in control of the extent of the advice you wish to commit to. Broadly, we evaluate your current practices at every stage of the course development process, referring to your policy documentation, discussing practice with relevant staff and analysing recent launch-to-market success and failure. The outcome is an evaluation report and handbook to help you implement the recommended changes.

## Delivery by

The Knowledge Partnership

## How does this service answer my questions?

Experience leads us to conclude that there are a series of components to a system that optimises new course development, the key ones being:

1. Developing a medium-/long-term vision for the university or faculty
2. Identifying opportunities and creating outline concepts
3. Initial evaluation of concepts to locate the best prospects
4. Market assessment and consultation to guide development and market positioning
5. Launch planning and execution
6. Review and iteration.

We evaluate the current practices at each of these stages by reference to the process documentation and discussions with those staff at the heart of this activity. Specifically, we focus on a sample of schools/departments to work through case studies of current practice.

We review past course developments to model the “features

and factors” that led to success, as transferring pre-existing effective practice within a university is liable to gain traction more quickly than simply importing expert advice, however well-informed that is. To achieve this, we review the recruitment data for the past three cycles to identify successful new launches and then evaluate the reasons for success or failure with the staff involved (and the students too).

To facilitate this process we have created two self-assessment tools built around the researched principles of portfolio management embedded in the Marketing Excellence for Education framework which was developed specifically for HE with HEFCE support.

- An agreed sample of staff are invited to complete a short 20-minute online self-assessment survey.
- A smaller sample of those with intimate knowledge of the institution’s policy and practice in this area are invited to complete a more detailed Excel-based evaluation tool.

## What will I get?

- A report evaluating for the NCD processes with recommendations how practice can be developed quickly and at lowest cost.
- A summary overview of how well the new programmes have fared over the past three cycles, relative to the targets that were set and agreed in the original proposals. This will set a baseline for future objective setting and provide further evidence of how robust the current processes actually are in managing risk.
- Mini case studies of successful new launches with the main lessons that can be transferred and built into (for example) a course developer handbook or training for heads of school/department.

**C**ourse  
**O**ptimisation for  
**M**arketing;  
**P**ortfolio  
**A**ssessment and  
**R**eview

**The Knowledge Partnership** is an international consultancy that specialises in marketing, communications and strategy development.

Formed in 2004, it has quickly established a reputation for delivering effective, hard-hitting advice that is specific to the high-value intangible service sectors such as education. Advice for individual clients is underpinned by original published research, learning from development projects funded by bodies such as the European Commission, the HEFCE and the LSC, and TKP's work overseas in New Zealand, Australia and Europe. Having worked with many institutions in the UK and Australasia, we are well placed to provide guidance on best practice in the related areas of new course development and portfolio review from a market perspective.

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**Opinionpanel** is the independent research business set up to represent the views of students and young people to social and market researchers. We offer a bespoke service running from sample-only jobs to complex full service projects. Much of our research is run through our three main panels, The Student Panel, The Graduate Panel and The Future Panel (we also run private client panels on contract). By blending our knowledge of student-life, higher education policy and commercial marketing projects we bring a fresh and insightful approach to all the sectors we serve.

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Marketing, strategy and communications for an educated world

**Opinionpanel**Research

Dedicated to understanding students *before*,  
*during* and *after* their time at university.