



PARTNERSHIP

MAXIMIZE

Excellence in Student Journey

Benchmark your institution against world-class standards as a basis to becoming market focussed across the whole university and integrated in your marketing.

Guide to Evaluation Services using the NEW V2 (2010) version

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The higher education sector has been aware for some time of the need to be more market directed in its thinking and activity at all levels, most especially at the level of the student experience (journey).

Suffice to say, the higher education globally is becoming increasingly complex and competitive. It is crucial that a University focuses on managing the risks within its capacity – its internal approach to build success in student and related markets such as with employers. Building responsive processes must be one of the catalysts for enhanced performance in student markets.

The 5Rs Partnership (<http://5rspartnership.com/>) assists Universities globally with a process to build an enhanced University-wide market orientation through an independent evaluation using the unique and world renowned higher education tool known as MAXIMIZE.

What is MAXIMIZE?

Market Excellence in Education (known as MAXIMIZE) is the most widely used tool for evaluating and benchmarking university marketing orientation, culture, processes and systems (refer Appendix 1).

MAXIMIZE can be applied specifically for the university and school sector and reflects the importance of people, culture, reputation and referral, courses, vision, the student experience and engagement. It does not evaluate the quality of your website or your advertising, but assesses the whole organisation's approach to students and student markets.

Using the experience gained from the more than 100 higher education institutions globally that have used the system, a new more focussed and user-friendly version has been created. V2 includes 95 best practice statements in 18 modules against which your university can be evaluated using one or a combination of three methods.

How can we use MAXIMIZE to evaluate and improve?

There are two methods:

1. MAXIMIZE CAMPUS is an online self assessment. It uses a questionnaire that has been derived from the statements of best practice. The questionnaire is completed by a defined stratified sample of university staff including the senior

management, marketers and academics with admissions, programme leader or management roles.

The 5Rs Partnership advises clients on the nature and size of the sample, and on how the survey should be communicated to staff, aiming to achieve an 80% response rate and an achieved sample of c200 (this depends on the nature and size of the institution).

The deliverable is a report containing benchmarking against the framework and other universities¹; it highlights your strengths and weaknesses at a detailed and more strategic level. Recommendations for action are informed by responses to questions that reveal the factors that are deemed to be the most critical in underpinning future student market success.

The benefits of CAMPUS (self assessment) are:

- A great way to set a baseline against which to set targets and subsequently evaluate improvements.
- Ensures that the review of marketing is strategic and captures perceptions from a range of academic, managerial and marketing perspective.
- A sound basis for setting priorities and for identifying specific areas where consultants might be able to add value through review and development.
- An educative process that by engaging a wide range of staff stimulates them to think more holistically about what delivers success in student markets.

2. MAXIMIZE REVIEW is an expert independent evaluation of your university incorporating the Campus component. It typically involves three stages:

- CAMPUS self assessment and reporting.
- The consultant (Dr Holmes) then spends several days on campus interviewing those lead staff and gathering evidence of current policy and practice. Special attention is paid to those areas that CAMPUS identified as being priority areas. The consultant uses the best practice standard specifications to guide this phase and his/her reporting.
- The reporting and presentations are focussed on recommendations for action and advice on how improvements can be implemented.

The additional benefits of REVIEW (independent assessment) include:

- Deeper and objective analysis of strengths and weakness, focussing on priority areas (critical strengths and critical weaknesses).

¹ External benchmarking data will build from 2010 as universities start to use the new system. Benchmarking against the 2003 V1 of Maximize is no longer feasible due to the radical redesign of the framework.

- Face-to-face engagement with the consultants creates greater buy in to subsequent change and allow for real time advice to be offered.
- Allowing internal perceptions of the University's market orientation to be reality checked against the objective conclusions of an experience education marketing consultant.

What others say about MAXIMIZE - Sample

'MaXimizE is being used by so many institutions because it is the first robust and comprehensive marketing, benchmarking and planning tool to be developed specifically for higher and further education – the first planning and benchmarking tool too, in my view, to define and support a market orientation in the Higher Education context.'

Professor Peter Slee Deputy Chancellor, Northumbria University, UK

Benefits of MaXIMIZE

- Evidence approach
- Full picture of client orientation and responsiveness
- Crucial for University wide, integrated planning
- Strengths and weaknesses in context of priorities
- Setting marketing objectives
- Baseline for progress measurement
- Basis for effective resource allocation
- Promote inclusive staff approach to market orientation
- Benchmarking locally, internationally
- Fitness for internal purpose – do the processes and practices support the vision and objectives that the University has set (strategic alignment)?
- Systematic, comprehensive, credible and independent evaluation
 - Are policies reflected in behaviour?
 - Is policy and good practice consistently applied across the institution?
- Integration and relationships - dependent variables
- Provides the strongest possible basis for market orientation development

How much does it cost?

REVIEW	\$25,000 US	Some modest additional incidental expenses
CAMPUS	\$9,000 US (standalone)	Can be Included in REVIEW and if so is an additional \$6000

How long does it take?

REVIEW	The elapsed time from commission to report is usually 2 months	The consultant will usually spend at least 5 days on campus in planning, executing and reporting the review.
CAMPUS	The elapsed time from commission to report is usually 4-6 weeks	The online survey takes 1.5 hours to complete but respondents can complete it in several sessions to fit around their schedules.

Who Provides the Support?

The 5Rs Partnership is an independent consultancy that specialises in marketing and communications for universities, colleges, schools and education agencies. We are passionate about the value of both education and efficacious marketing & communications.

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Appendix 1 MaXimize Model

The Marketing Excellence Model

