

ESOMAR 28 QUESTIONS TO HELP BUYERS OF ONLINE SAMPLES

COMPANY PROFILE

1. What experience does your company have in providing online samples for market research?

Student Edge was founded in 2003 by students who recognised the need to provide their community with free access to online services aimed at students, such as discounts, giveaways and advice on study, courses, part-time work, careers and job-readiness. We strive to enrich the lives of young people by delivering the highest value benefits to our Members. Student Edge entered the Market Research industry in early 2014, and now supply to independent research consultants, full service market research agencies, direct clients and other panel companies.

SAMPLE SOURCES AND RECRUITMENT

2. Please describe and explain the type(s) of online sample sources from which you get respondents. Are these databases? Actively managed research panels? Direct marketing lists? Social networks? Web intercept (also known as river) samples?

Student Edge recruits its panellists through on-campus face to face recruitment at high schools, TAFEs and Universities across Australia, as well as via online channels such as studentedge.com.au and Facebook. We have only one sample source, which is the Student Edge member community. It is an actively managed research panel in that we double opt-in members, profile members and provide incentives for all surveys.

3. If you provide samples from more than one source: How are the different sample sources blended together to ensure validity? How can this be replicated over time to provide reliability? How do you deal with the possibility of duplication of respondents across sources?

The vast majority of the projects we run at Student Edge utilise only our panel. Where more than one sample source is required, this is determined during the feasibility phase. Any partners we utilise will be communicated to our client in advance of doing so, ensuring full transparency. Duplication will be managed within the survey platform through IP address, email address and other available de-duplication functions.

4. Are your sample source(s) used solely for market research? If not, what other purposes are they used for?

The Student Edge panel is utilised for market research surveys, in home usage tests, focus groups, competitions and marketing.

The first priority for Student Edge clients is our data quality. We have created internal systems that assess and quarantine respondents who have participated in marketing activity within a given category within the last 3 months.

5. How do you source groups that may be hard to reach on the internet?

The Student Edge panel was set up to provide access with the hard-to-reach 15-24 age group, including international students and those in regional areas. We have profiling on niche targets such as international students, or those who study at particular universities or in particular fields, and are working on expanding our profiling.

6. If, on a particular project, you need to supplement your sample(s) with sample(s) from other providers, how do you select those partners? Is it your policy to notify a client in advance when using a third party provider?

Student Edge policy is to only quote for what we can deliver from our own panel. If our clients request that we outsource, we are able to do so via trusted partners who have shared with us their quality practices, and who have a strong track record of consistently high quality. We would always notify a client before utilising a partner, and would do so at the feasibility assessment stage when possible.

SAMPLING AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

7. What steps do you take to achieve a representative sample of the target population?

The Student Edge panel is in the youth niche, and therefore we don't deliver census-representative sample according to age. We do, however, use our age, gender and regional profiling to deliver sample stratified according to our clients' requirements, including census representative on gender and region, where appropriate.

8. Do you employ a survey router?

We do not employ the use of a survey router.

9. If you use a router: Please describe the allocation process within your router. How do you decide which surveys might be considered for a respondent? On what priority basis are respondents allocated to surveys?

N/A

10. If you use a router: What measures do you take to guard against, or mitigate, any bias arising from employing a router? How do you measure and report any bias?

N/A

11. If you use a router: Who in your company sets the parameters of the router? Is it a dedicated team or individual project managers?

N/A

12. What profiling data is held on respondents? How is it done? How does this differ across sample sources? How is it kept up-to-date? If no relevant profiling data is held, how are low incidence projects dealt with?

Student Edge currently holds basic profiling information, and we are planning to expand in late 2016. Profile information is captured in two ways:

Registration – When the member joins they are asked to provide the following information: Gender, Age, postcode, International student status, educational institution, area of study.

Pre-qualification - surveys on a variety of topics used to profile members for sampling purposes.

13. Please describe your survey invitation process. What is the proposition that people are offered to take part in individual surveys? What information about the project itself is given in the process? Apart from direct invitations to specific surveys (or to a router), what other means of invitation to surveys are respondents exposed to? You should note that not all invitations to participate take the form of emails.

We invite our members via email to participate in online surveys. We reward our members by giving them entries to win a prize through a 'chance to win' mechanic, or through direct Giftpax rewards. Survey invitations are personalised and targeted using our profiling variables. We provide the following content in survey invitations:

Clear mention of the nature of the contact (survey invitation)
Unique URL providing survey access
Mention of the incentive provided
Option to unsubscribe from communications

14. Please describe the incentives that respondents are offered for taking part in your surveys. How does this differ by sample source, by interview length, by respondent characteristics?

Rewards offered typically vary depending on survey length and the demographic characteristics of the target group. On some surveys a prize draw mechanic will be used whereby a unique prize is given to a participating member – typically one of a range of vouchers from brands that tend to appeal to youth, or a flexible voucher that can be used at a variety of retailers. We also utilize Giftpax rewards where appropriate.

15. What information about a project do you need in order to give an accurate estimate of feasibility using your own resources?

In order to produce an accurate feasibility and cost assessment, the Student Edge team will request the following:

- Services required (Full Service or Sample Only)
- Desired target group, including incidence rate (if known)
- Desired quotas
- Survey topic
- Length of interview
- Required launch and close dates
- Smartphone capability (for sample only)

16. Do you measure respondent satisfaction? Is this information made available to clients?

Student Edge conducts ad-hoc respondent satisfaction surveys with its members. For full service projects, where possible we will typically ask the member for feedback on how to improve their experience. Project Managers monitor these responses, and our customer service team communicate any feedback to the project managers for feedback to client, and action where appropriate.

17. What information do you provide to debrief your client after the project has finished?

Project managers at Student Edge maintain contact with clients throughout each project, from launch to close. Key variables discussed include LOI, IR, response rates, screen outs, quota fulls, and completes achieved vs. target. Any issues are raised as early as possible (typically after soft launch), and final numbers confirmed with our clients upon project completion.

DATA QUALITY AND VALIDATION

18. Who is responsible for data quality checks? If it is you, do you have in place procedures to reduce or eliminate undesired within survey behaviours, such as (a) random responding, (b) illogical or inconsistent responding, (c) overuse of item non-response (e.g. “Don’t Know”) or (d) speeding (too rapid survey completion)? Please describe these procedures.

For full service projects hosted by the Student Edge team, we will monitor data quality throughout the project, starting with an assessment of the questionnaire to predict any potential quality issues. At the conclusion of a project, the Student Edge project manager will review the data and remove bad data (e.g. straight-liners, speeders, junk open ended responders).

For Sample-Only projects, our project managers typically reach agreement with our clients as to what constitutes bad data, or speeding (e.g. survey completion in less than half of average), with bad data removed by our client and not paid for.

19. How often can the same individual be contacted to take part in a survey within a specified period whether they respond to the contact or not? How does this vary across your sample sources?

Student Edge members are invited to no more than one survey per day, as a rule. Further exclusions are available upon client request.

20. How often can the same individual take part in a survey within a specified period? How does this vary across your sample sources? How do you manage this within categories and/or time periods?

These restrictions are applied on a per-invite basis as opposed to a per-complete basis. We have the ability to exclude (from invitation) members who have completed a survey on a particular topic in a recent period, upon request.

21. Do you maintain individual level data such as recent participation history, date of entry, source, etc., on your survey respondents? Are you able to supply your client with a project analysis of such individual level data?

Student Edge has the ability to track a range of data including registration date, survey participation dates as well as the status for each of the surveys a member has attempted or completed. This can be provided to a client on a per-project basis.

22. Do you have a confirmation of respondent identity procedure? Do you have procedures to detect fraudulent respondents? Please describe these procedures as they are implemented at sample source registration and/or at the point of entry to a survey or router. If you offer B2B samples what are the procedures there, if any?

Student Edge primarily recruits members face to face at high schools, universities and TAFEs. Members indicate their institution name and course studied, as well as their address (for membership card and incentive purposes).

To address fraudulent data, we apply a 3-strikes policy whereby members will not be invited to further surveys if they supply bad data on 3 occasions.

POLICIES AND COMPLIANCE

23. Please describe the 'opt-in for market research' processes for all your online sample sources.

Student Edge recruits its panellists through on-campus face to face recruitment at high schools, TAFEs and Universities across Australia, as well as via online channels such as studentedge.com.au and Facebook.

Once they are Student Edge members, a solus email invitation is sent to them. No cost is involved when joining Student Edge.

24. Please provide a link to your Privacy Policy. How is your Privacy Policy provided to your respondents?

The Student Edge Privacy Policy is located on our website at the following URL:
<http://www.studentedge.com.au/Footer-Links/Privacy.aspx>

The Privacy Policy is accessible via our website at any time. Student Edge is fully compliant with the Privacy Act 1988 and Spam Act 2003. We are committed to protecting the privacy and confidential information of our members.

Student Edge also follows best practice guidelines for online fieldwork, including the ESOMAR World Research Codes and Guidelines.

25. Please describe the measures you take to ensure data protection and data security.

Student Edge website and member data is hosted on Microsoft Azure servers, and is protected by Microsoft's business enterprise data security services (<http://azure.microsoft.com/en-us/support/trust-center/security/>).

26. What practices do you follow to decide whether online research should be used to present commercially sensitive client data or materials to survey respondents?

At the quotation stage, Student Edge communicates any concerns with our client in relation to the potential for commercially sensitive information to be leaked to the public via an online survey. We have the ability to communicate to members that information is sensitive and must not be shared, although in practice this is not possible to guarantee via the online methodology.

27. Are you certified to any specific quality system? If so, which one(s)?

As a niche supplier, Student Edge is not certified to any formal quality systems. We follow best practice principles for online panel and fieldwork management such as the ESOMAR World Research Codes and Guidelines, the Privacy Act 1988 and the Spam Act 2003.

28. Do you conduct online surveys with children and young people? If so, do you adhere to the standards that ESOMAR provides? What other rules or standards, for example COPPA in the United States, do you comply with?

Student Edge is bound by the requirements of the National Privacy Principles contained in the Privacy Act 1988 (the "Privacy Act"). These obligations under the Privacy Act are taken very seriously and we are committed to protecting and maintaining our members' privacy. We follow the ICC/ESOMAR International Code on Market and Social research which states that "the identity of respondents will not be revealed to the user of the information without explicit consent and no sales approach will be made to them as a direct result of their having provided information". (www.esomar.org/uploads/public/knowledge-and-standards/codes-and-guidelines/ICCESOMAR_Code_English_.pdf).

