

## **Marketing plan for CQU**

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## **Executive Summary**

This report is dedicated to explore the market situation, marketing strategies, competitors and the upcoming marketing plan of the Central Queensland University. The author has identified that the university is operating successfully in both the urban and rural campuses with 58:42 ratio. The university is experiencing high market growth with the augment in the Australian educational sector. However, the competitors are serving high competition to the university. The company is using the cost leadership strategy that is helping the organization is collecting huge student base. By using BCG matrix, it can be suggested that the university can invest in introducing online courses and thus foreign market expansion for better market performance.

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## Introduction

Every product can excel in the market while having an appropriate marketing plan. In this brief opportunity of study, the product is the courses of the university, and the marketing plan has been suggested by the Central Queensland University. Here in this study the existing market for the university and the possible expansion through the competitor analysis and the target market segmentation has been considered. In addition to this possible recommendation based on the BCG matrix based analysis and the budgeting for the promotional activities in this incumbent situation has been considered. This can be mentioned that this particular analysis and the result oriented business proposal approach will help the university to formulate a specific marketing plan for the current year.

## Background

The Central Queensland University has been initiated their journey in 1967. The motto of the organisation is the 'forever learning'. This shows the university's commitment towards the maintenance of the relentless qualitative improvement process. After establishing as the educational organisation, they earned their university status in 1992. More than 35,000 students are graduating from the different campuses of the university situated in, Gladstone, New South Wales, Brisbane, Mackey, Sydney, and other campuses (Cqu.edu.au, 2017).



*Figure: Logo of the University*

(Source: "Home - CQU", 2017)

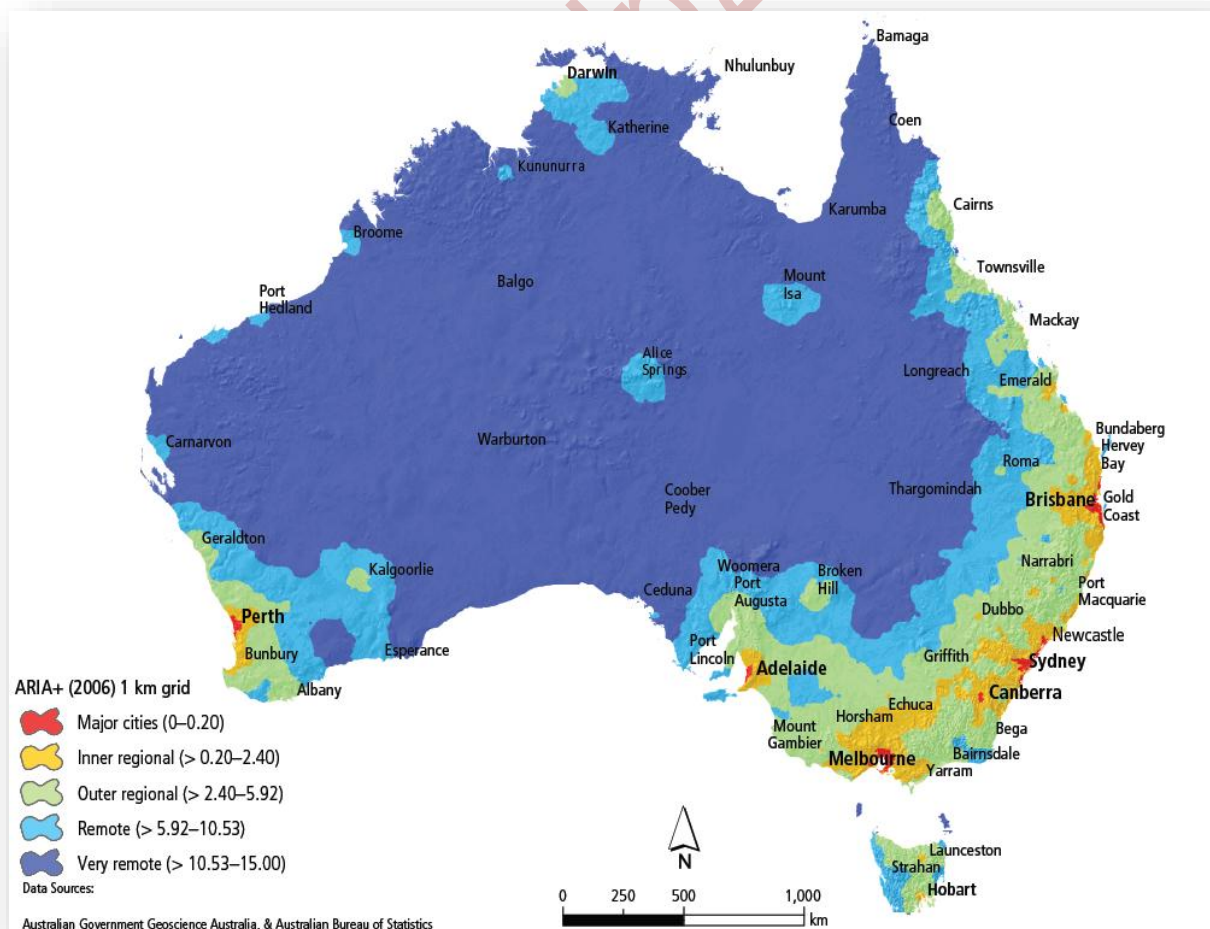
The university has concentrated on the expansion of the university campus regardless of the places. As opined by Fredericks *et al.*, (2015) CQU has expanded in the several

locations, beside the urban area the university has also focused on the rural areas as well. Now, at his moment the university is striving to expand in the several locations of Australia besides having the vision to expand in the New Zealand as well.

### Market and demand analysis

In order to discuss the demand analysis regarding products of CQU, it is important to focus on the three factors which have been mentioned below

**Demographics:** The University has expanded to several locations with a variety of the courses. These have helped CQU to target several types of the consumers regardless of their economic status and the purchase capability. Different income group have been a target by the university in order to support the marketing aim and the objective of CQU. For example, CQU has university campus segregation ratio of 58:42 in the urban and rural area (Cqu.edu.au, 2017).



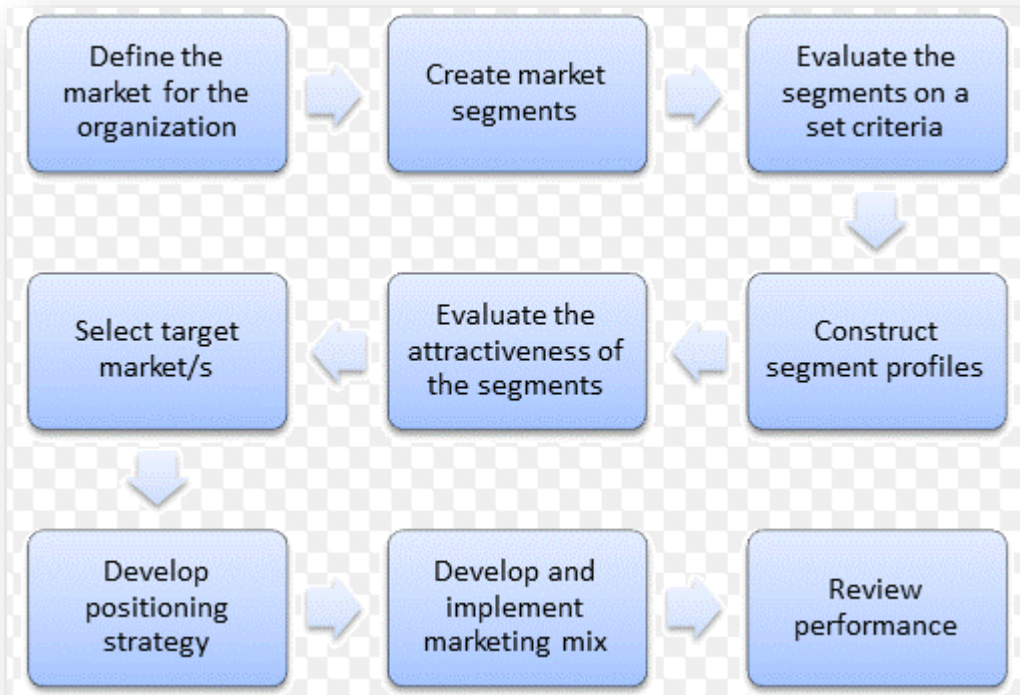
## **Figure: Demographic map of Australia**

(Source: Geoscience Australia, 2017)

**Segmentation:** The University has offered the courses which are useful for the people living in the specific area. During the expansion, the university has also expanded in the remote areas like Cairns, Townsville and Brainsdale (Cqu.edu.au, 2017). In these remote areas, the university has offered different ambitious technical courses and the general study courses as well. Thus these have helped the university to target every income group and the different types of the merits as well.

**Target market analysis:** The University has targeted different range of customers, and the students have been offered different study discipline. The organisation has expanded in the major cities like Sydney, Melbourne and Gold Coast. There the university has mostly offered the technical course like B. Tech in different verticals. This can be mentioned as the prime marketing decision which has helped the organisation to attract a major chunk of the national and international students who are aspiring for the better study in the Australia. On the other hand, the university has also offered regular courses in which subject wise honours majors can be done in remote areas where the trend of the traditional studies still exists on a huge level.

In these aspects, it can be mentioned that the university has followed the specific model for the target market segmentation. The specific model has been identified, and the explained below in brief.



**Figure: Model for the target market segmentation**

(Source: Gengler, & Mulvey, 2017)

As per the process mentioned in the model the university has followed similarly. CQU has first established, and then targeted the small section of the students while offering them a few number of courses. Then the university has targeted the next level of the customers in terms of students who are not getting enough facility of study in spite of having the economic resources, and due to this factor the university has expanded in the remote areas and targeted those customers as well. Depending upon the technique of the deeper penetration of the existing market the university has positioned their brand in such area in which they have been tagged as the institution providing quality education with affordable prices and have vast ranges of courses.

### **Pest Analysis**

As opined by Yeoh, & Popovic, (2016) it is pivotal to evaluate the external factors of the organisation whenever the chief objective is to analyse the current market situation and identification of the possible expansion of the markets depending upon the previous analysis.

Thus in this section, the PEST analysis of the organisation have been considered as the valuable source of information.

Factors	Analysis
Political	<p>The Australian government is always supportive for the educational organisation. The country has always strived to achieve academic excellence. The expansion of the University of CQU in the several campuses is the proof that the government is helping the university to expand accordingly. Additionally, the organisation can also expand internationally. New Zealand is the nearest location where CQU can expand. However, it will be important for the university to understand the political situation of the country before expanding. However, it can be mentioned that the national expansion experience of the university can be helpful in achieving greater success in the international operation.</p>
Economic	<p>Liu, &amp; Di Iorio, (2016) mentioned that Australia is having a stable economy and also have the potential to become one of the strongest economies in the world. Since 2009 the country is showing the capital growth of staggering 41% which has been remained as the average capital growth over the period of past eight years ("Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Government", 2017). Cities like Brisbane and Perth have become the business capital, and this is attracting international candidates to come to Australia. Now in this situation, CQU needs to concentrate on the inclusion of the technical courses which can help them to penetrate the existing Australian market with greater intensity. Australia is one of the OECD countries which indicate the country is also getting external</p>



	support as well for the better economic growth and viability.
Social	In Australia only 55 of the entire population belongs from the upper class and the nucleus portion of the society is working class. Thus this can be mentioned as the chief operating tool for the CQU where the university can help to establish their brand name as the university providing quality education with affordable prices. This will attract the native and the international students as well. Moreover, getting a higher education is the growing trend in the Australian and the New Zealand market. As per the data, in 1992 only 12.7 of the population were inclined to the higher education. This rate has raised up to 57%, and the people are more concerned towards the better educational facility ("Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Government", 2017). Hence it can be mentioned this is a growing opportunity for the university to expand their business.
Technological	With the rise of technology in the business, the operation has facilitated the economic growth (Bates, 2014). In Australia involvement of the cloud technology in the business arena has revolutionised the capital growth. Incorporation of the technology in the field of education has also grown significantly. For instance distance education through the help of internet based communication and the exam system has become parallel to the regular courses in Australia and New Zealand. Thus, CQU can expand through the online educational system and realise the cost effective expansion benefits as well.

**Table: PEST analysis**

(Source: Created by author)

### **Competitor analysis**

As mentioned by Al Shobaki and Naser, (2017) with the growth in the Australian education sector, a number of credible universities have emerged as typical market competitors of each other. In such a context, the major two competitors of CQ University are: "Bond University" and "Griffith University". Both of them are based in Queensland and possess competitive ranking with CQ University in Times ranking.

The Bond University:

The Website of Bond University states that their goal is to change the lives of the students. They have stated that the University provides the highest quality educational experience by focusing on learning environment, quality teaching, personal development and graduate outcome (Bond University, 2017).

Promotional strategies:

The University promotes itself in both the traditional and digital marketing strategies. In the traditional methods, it uses hoardings, flex, etc. for creating brand awareness. On the other hand, in the digital strategies the organisation has Facebook and other social media pages, and with the help of the website, it communicates the marketing messages to the potential students (Bond University, 2017).

Griffith University:

The University has identified five sets of distinct aims. Those are: generating new knowledge to improve health outcome, promote effective transfer of research outcomes into health policy and/or practice, and facilitate collaboration, record research and translation achievement (Griffith University, 2017).

Promotional strategies:

As opined by Al Shobaki and Naser, (2017) in the education sectors competitors use almost same strategic outlines in collecting students. Griffith also uses both the traditional and digital marketing strategies as used by the Bond University. However, the organisation focuses on maintaining public relations for better marketing approach with the policies like child care unit for the local community, campus events and others (Griffith University, 2017).

Hence, it can be mentioned that the major competitors of the CQ University are using the most common strategies for their marketing communication.

### SWOT analysis

<b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brand value</li> <li>• Successful alumni</li> <li>• Cost effective marketing strategy</li> <li>• Proper expansion and several campuses in Australia</li> </ul>	<b>Weakness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fewer offerings of courses</li> <li>▪ Low level of distance courses</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Growing trend in the country regarding the higher education</li> <li>❖ Growing number of the international students</li> <li>❖ Rise of technology</li> </ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sudden political instability</li> <li>○ Sharp competition</li> <li>○ Rise in cost of the educational equipment</li> </ul>

*Table: SWOT analysis of CQU*

(Source: Created by author)

As discussed in the tabular format, the chief strength of the CQU is the exiting brand value and the successful list of alumni. This two can be promoted as the chief factor while doing the marketing campaign for the organisation. However there are possible weaknesses have also been identified, which includes the less number of courses. Thus CQU needs to incorporate several technical courses augmented with the real time technical exposure which can help them to attract the student of the new generation who is careerist and have the inclination to enhance their skills sets with higher education, as suggested by Bates, (2014). However, the rise of the technology can help in minimising the cost of the marketing and other allied cost of business operation. Moreover, Button, Harrington, & Belan, (2014) suggested that initiation of the online course through the distance education can mention as the another opportunity for the organisation.

## Brand positioning

As identified by Furey, Springer and Parsons, (2014) brand positioning is the qualities or identities of a brand that is aimed to make a distinct position in the minds of the customers in relation to the competitors. As mentioned by Al Shobaki and Naser, (2017) in the context of universities, the brand value can be identified by the review of the students, the after-education placement of the students, the course fees, qualities of the faculty members and world class rankings. However, it may vary in different cases.

In the context of CQ University, the organisation has been identified by the students with a few pros and cons. The students identify the organisation highly in the context of regional facilities, low tuition fees, distance educational option, highly qualified and helpful teachers (Cqu.edu.au, 2017). On the other hand, they have identified the university low in the course verities.

The major brand value of the organisation lies in its extensive network of study centres even in the rural areas. Moreover, half of the students of the Central Queensland University are the distant learners. It is serving a high level of satisfaction among the students about the competitor universities. The low course fees are creating an attractive brand image to both the rural and international students.

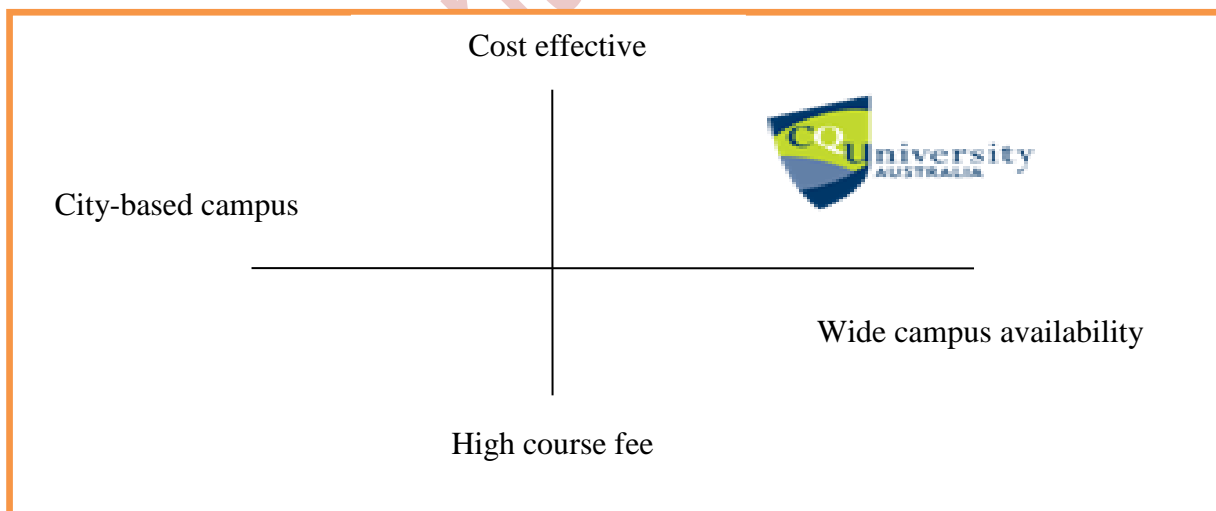


Figure: Brand positioning of the CQ University

Source: Created by the author

### **Marketing aim and promotional objectives:**

As discussed by Dobrotvorskaya and Kalimullin, (2016) for obtaining better market positions, the organisations need to concentrate on its marketing mix and mainly the promotional strategies. In the context of the educational organisations, it becomes hard for the Universities to opt for out and out promotional strategies. Hence, they need to concentrate on the promotional ways those create a better brand image to the potential students.

With the identification of the brand value and image of the university in the minds of both the national and international students, the followings can be identified as some of the major marketing plans of the organisation in the coming years.

- Expand the market approach of the University by expanding campuses in the foreign countries like New Zealand
- Introduce change in the marketing mix by introducing new courses and inclusion of online education

For the successful implementation of these marketing plans, the University may opt for the following promotional strategies:

#### ❖ Public relations:

As mentioned by Mogaji, E. (2016) opting for the public relational strategies are the most effective and popular way of marketing. It helps both in the process of uplifting the brand image and communicating the marketing messages to the target customer base. Here, the university can sponsor the talented and financially backwards students (both from national and international sector) to study in their own or other universities. It will be helpful for them in the process of collecting talented students those can help in the process of increasing the brand image and obtaining a competitive brand advantage over the competitors.

#### ❖ Social media engagement:

The organisation needs to be more engaged in the social media communication with the potential student base. Here, they can opt for promotional blogs which will be helpful for the students to know about the university facilities from others. On the other hand, the organisation can also opt for the strategy of direct communication between the university professionals and the potential students with the help of social media channels.

Thus a better engagement can be achieved from the students' end in both the national and international market of the University.

**Strategies for marketing mix:**

As mentioned by Yaghubian, Mahmoudi and Tiji, (2016) marketing mix is the basic strategy formulation in the process of selecting and categorising the marketing plan and promotional strategies. Hence, it is important to create a strategically identified marketing mix for obtaining optimum market success. The followings can be identified as the marketing mix of the Central Queensland University. However, for the proposed marketing plan, this marketing mix will opt for certain changes within it.

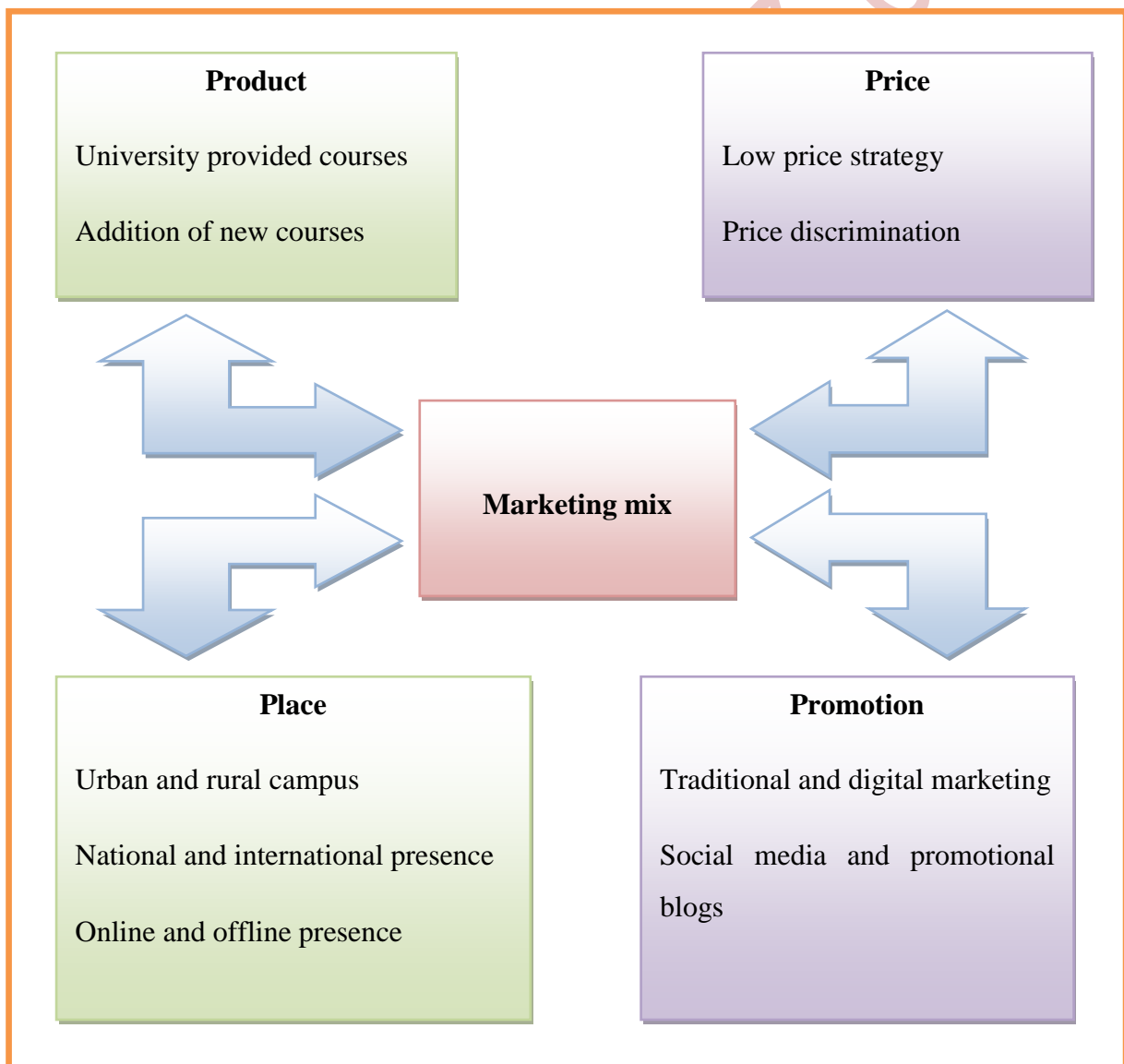


Figure: Marketing mix CQ University

(Source: Created by the author)

### Competitive strategies (Budget and BCG matrix):

As mentioned by Al Shobaki and Naser, (2017) the generic strategies of competitive advantage suggested by Porter mention three distinctive guidelines. These are: cost leadership, differentiation and focus. However, by evaluating the marketing strategies of the CQ University, it can be mentioned that the university follows the strategy of cost leadership. As mentioned by Francis and Ogutu, (2015) in the cost leadership strategy, the organisations set a price range which is typically lower than the competitors. This particular strategy helps an organisation in the process of huge customer collection. With the help of this strategy, CQ University has collected a huge number of national and international students.

Now, with the help of the BCG matrix, it will be easier to identify the popular and successful services of the CQ University along with the courses which are bringing a low market return. With this identification, it will be helpful for the organisation in the process of formulating the marketing plan.

<b>Star</b>	<b>Question mark</b>
Courses in business accounting and law Engineering and technology	Health, medical and applied sciences
<b>Cash cow</b>	<b>Dog</b>
Online educational course	Courses in education and arts

Figure: BCG matrix for CQ University

(Source: Created by the author)

From the above BCG matrix, it can be identified that the Courses in business accounting and law and Engineering and technology is consuming the major financial investments with having the most popular customer choice. On the other hand, online educational courses can earn high income with low investment to the university, with the availability in the foreign market. When the company can invest more in the Question mark courses of Health, medical and applied sciences, it can withdraw the courses of in education and arts. From the above BCG matrix, it can be suggested that the university can invest in the online educational courses as it has the potentiality of being the star in future.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, it can be stated that the university is performing well in the Australian market. However, for responding to the market opportunities it can include some alterations in the marketing mix and marketing strategies. With investing in the idea of online courses, the university will be able to obtain a better market share in both the national and international educational market.

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