



Institutional Benchmarking Policy

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy and procedure provides a framework for benchmarking performance at the Polytechnic Institute Australia ('PIA'). It seeks to ensure that the approach to benchmarking activities are systematic, coordinated and standardised.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy and procedure applies to all areas of PIA's operations and performance, including teaching, learning, and student experience, and to all staff directly involved in benchmarking exercises.

3 POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 This policy and procedure is founded on PIA's commitment to continual improvement in all areas. In particular, it acknowledges the following:
- 3.1.1 that institutional benchmarking against comparable institutions supports PIA's strategic objectives, and ensures the currency and relevance of its broader mission; and
- 3.1.2 that ongoing performance review is central to safeguarding standards and maintaining the integrity of quality assurance processes.

Principles

- 3.2 Benchmarking at PIA seeks to ensure:
- that benchmarking projects are coordinated, planned and managed in a systematic manner, with clear alignment to accepted standards of best practice in the sector;
 - that benchmarking planning incorporates clear and achievable objectives;
 - that expectations and documentation relating to project scope, responsibilities, measures, indicators, deadlines, and deliverables are clearly communicated and understood;
 - that areas for potential improvement are promptly identified and responses implemented;
 - that all results are duly analysed, reviewed and reported to the appropriate bodies; and
 - that benchmarking projects is regularly evaluated.

Types of Benchmarking



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3.3 PIA will benchmarking:

- with external partners and institutions in either the higher education sector or in industry; and
- through referencing against sector standards and classifications.

3.3.1 External Benchmarking

External benchmarking at PIA will focus on the following main areas:

- Grade distribution (HEPP-QN);
- Position Description;
- Assessments;
- A diagnostic analysis of the probable causes for observed rates and trends for student attrition, progression, minimum time completion rates and absent failure rates, for each higher education course it offers. The analysis must include accurate data on student attrition, completion, progression, grade distribution and absent failure rates and include analysis by:
 - entry path (comparing students admitted under each entry pathway);
 - credit awarded (comparing students admitted with no credit awarded with students admitted with credit for up to a third of the course and between a third and two thirds of the course);
 - education agent;
 - basis for assessment of the student's English language proficiency;
 - country of origin;
 - referral to and uptake of student support (including participation in formal study support programs); and
 - student achievement in similar courses at other higher education providers.
- Annual benchmarking project HEPP-QN and IHEA.

4 PROCEDURES

Benchmarking at PIA will incorporate the following broad phases:

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The Dean is responsible for benchmarking in academic areas, and the Registrar for non-academic areas.

6 DEFINITIONS

6.1 Terms not defined in this document may be in the PIA glossary.

Terms and definitions

Benchmarking: a measurement of performance, efficacy and quality against comparable practices, processes and outcomes which seeks to identify areas of potential and areas for improvement.

7 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

Documents

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Quality Assurance Framework

TEQSA Guidance Note: External Referencing (including Benchmarking)



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Higher Education Standards Framework

7.1 This policy and procedure complies with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015, Standard 5.3, which states:

1. All accredited courses of study are subject to periodic (at least every seven years) comprehensive reviews that are overseen by peak academic governance processes and include external referencing or other benchmarking activities.
4. Review and improvement activities include regular external referencing of the success of student cohorts against comparable courses of study, including:
 - a. analyses of progression rates, attrition rates, completion times and rates and, where applicable, comparing different locations of delivery, and
 - b. the assessment methods and grading of students' achievement of learning outcomes for selected units of study within courses of study.
7. The results of regular interim monitoring, comprehensive reviews, external referencing and student feedback are used to mitigate future risks to the quality of the education provided and to guide and evaluate improvements, including the use of data on student progress and success to inform admission criteria and approaches to course design, teaching, supervision, learning and academic support.

7.2 This policy and procedure also complies with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015, Standard 1.4, which states:

1. The expected learning outcomes for each course of study are specified, consistent with the level and field of education of the qualification awarded, and informed by national and international comparators.
3. Methods of assessment are consistent with the learning outcomes being assessed, are capable of confirming that all specified learning outcomes are achieved and that grades awarded reflect the level of student attainment.
4. On completion of a course of study, students have demonstrated the learning outcomes specified for the course of study, whether assessed at unit level, course level, or in combination.

8 FEEDBACK

8.1 PIA staff and students may provide feedback about this document by emailing policy@pia.edu.au.

9 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Administrator	Dean