



BENCHMARKING POLICY

Purpose

AIB is committed to identifying good practice and avenues for continuous improvement. Benchmarking is therefore a key component of the quality assurance framework of AIB. This policy sets out AIB's approach to benchmarking.

Scope

This policy applies to the academic and higher education operations of AIB.

Definitions

Unless otherwise defined in this document, all capitalised terms are defined in the [glossary](#).

Details

1. Overview

- 1.1 AIB benchmarking activities are as per rolling review of various aspects of AIB course design and delivery, and teaching and learning and research operations, so that these are addressed in turn over an appropriate time period. The priorities for any given time period shall be determined by the AIB management or Academic Board, depending on the routine schedule of Benchmarking activities and any identified issues in need of attention.

2. Types of Benchmarking

AIB will use different forms of Benchmarking, including:

- 2.1 Organisational benchmarking in which comparisons are made at the institutional level, such as entry criteria and grade distributions.
- 2.2 Outcomes benchmarking, e.g. organisational and student outcomes such as attrition and completions.
- 2.3 Process benchmarking which entails the benchmarking of particular processes and practices.
- 2.4 Course benchmarking which may include comparison of course design and learning outcomes.
- 2.5 Best practice benchmarking with leading practitioners or comparators in relevant areas of operations.

3. Typical areas to be benchmarked

These may include:

3.1 Teaching and Learning

- (a) Student performance such as grade distribution, progression rates, retention rates/attrition rates/completion rates
- (b) Graduate outcomes, i.e. graduate course satisfaction, graduate employment and further study
- (c) Staff qualifications
- (d) Course admission criteria
- (e) Course design, including learning outcomes and methods of assessment which may be via Peer Review processes to validate grades awarded reflect the level of student attainment
- (f) Teaching performance
- (g) Student feedback
- (h) Moderation, e.g. external double marking of samples of assessment items
- (i) Offshore delivery.

3.2 Research

- (a) Research output by staff
- (b) Research degree completions.

3.3 Higher Education operations

- (a) Governance
- (b) Risk management
- (c) Resources and infrastructure.

4. Benchmarking partners

- 4.1 Benchmarking partners shall be higher education providers of similar level programs and may include professional bodies relevant to degrees offered by AIB.
- 4.2 Benchmarking partners shall be selected on the basis of their commitment to quality improvement and willingness to share information on a mutually confidential basis and their record of good performance in the area(s) to be benchmarked.
- 4.3 The arrangements with benchmarking partners should be reflected in formal agreements which set out the purpose, the area(s) of benchmarking, the benchmarking processes employed, the possible outcomes, confidentiality issues and the permitted use of benchmarking information by the parties.

5. Implementation

- 5.1 Each benchmarking project should normally involve:
 - (a) appropriate project management
 - (b) clear expectations for deliverables and deadlines, and
 - (c) explicitly articulated benchmarking process plans involving self-review and peer-review stages.

- 5.2 Implementation of each benchmarking project should normally result in:
- (a) identification of good practices and areas for improvement
 - (b) development of recommendations to address areas for improvement
 - (c) clear understanding of the findings of the benchmarking process and the ways to implement the desired improvements.

6. Communicating outcomes

- 6.1 The outcomes of benchmarking activities may be:
- (a) Shared with relevant functional areas and used to identify good practices, areas for improvement and recommendations for action
 - (b) Advised to Quality, Risk and Compliance Committee, Teaching and Learning Committee and/or Research and Higher Degrees Committee, Academic Board and Board of Directors
 - (c) Where possible, developed into research publications to be published by AIB staff.
- 6.2 Benchmarking reports should be lodged with the Quality section.
- 6.3 Evaluation of the improvements based on benchmarking projects, both formative and summative, should be reported to the Quality, Risk and Compliance Committee who will review the progress against the plans and forward progress reports to Teaching and Learning Committee and/or Research and Higher Degrees Committee, Academic Board and Board of Directors.

Related Forms:

Nil

Related Policies:

Assurance of Learning Policy
Course and Subject Review Policy
Research and Research Degrees Policy

Responsibility:

Academic Director

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