Draft Benchmarking Procedure

Benchmarking Procedure

Related Policy  Benchmarking Policy
Responsible Officer  Provost
Approved by  Provost
Approved and commenced  TBA, 2011
Review by  TBA, 2014
Responsible Organisational Unit  Office of the Provost

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1 Objective

This Procedure provides instructions to facilitate the implementation of the Benchmarking Policy. The Benchmarking Procedure is also aligned to the Reviews Policy which outlines a process of review. The Benchmarking review process is outlined in Appendix A. A benchmarking activity may include up to nine distinct stages as part of the review process.

2 Scope

This Procedure applies to all organisational units, all staff and all functions of the University.

3 Procedure

3.1 Stage 1 - Scope the Benchmarking Activity

When scoping the benchmarking activity consider:

- **Areas to benchmark**: Will it be a theme, process; performance, organisational behaviour or compliance requirement?
- **Nature of benchmarking**: Will it be a data comparison project only; a more detailed investigation to improve performance or a combination of both?
- **Level of application**: Will it be whole of organisation or an organisational subunit (e.g. faculty, school, university institute, division, campus etc.)?
- **Nature of partnership**: Will it be an informal partnership; a formal relationship which requires a Memorandum of Understanding; a membership partnership or an internal benchmarking activity across a number of organisational units?
- **Alignment to strategic purposes**: Does it align with University planning and quality improvement purposes?
- **Resourcing implications**: Who will resource the benchmarking activity?

3.2 Stage 2 - Decide on Type of Benchmarking

When deciding on the type of benchmarking consider:

- No one type is better than the other—it depends on the specific context and purpose of the benchmarking activity;
- Is it about the comparison of outcomes? (outcome)
- Is it about understanding University processes? (process)
- Is it for information only? (information)
- Is it to be used to improve strategic performance? (strategic)
- Is it across a range of processes? (horizontal)
- Is it about drilling down vertically layer by layer? (vertical)
- Is it about sharing and comparing information with membership groups? (functional)
- Is it comparing outcomes and processes internally? (internal)
- Is it about comparing outcomes and processes externally? (external)
- Does it include one or more of these types?
3.3 **Stage 3 - Select and Secure Benchmarking Partners**

When selecting appropriate benchmarking partners consider:

- Partners who are recognised leaders in the area that you want to benchmark;
- Alternatively, select benchmarking partners who share similar problems, outcomes or practices as you so that you both learn;
- When considering external partners consider size, research/teaching emphasis, academic profile-similar disciplines taught; age of university; multi-campus based.

3.4 **Stage 4 - Levels of Approval and Support**

Before approaching a potential benchmarking partner/partners to collaborate on a benchmarking activity consider:

- Who are the key decision makers who can endorse and progress the development of the benchmarking activity? (Heads of School, Deans, Unit Head/Director, Senior Executive, Vice Chancellor)
- For external benchmarking activity-do you require a Memorandum of Understanding or a formal agreement to be developed in collaboration with Governance and Legal.
- Advice and support on levels of approval for benchmarking is available from the Provost Office.

3.5 **Stage 5 - Develop a Project Plan**

When developing a project plan for a benchmarking activity consider:

- What are the purposes/aims of the benchmarking activity?
- What is the proposed timeline for the project and action plan?
- What budget will be required?
- What is the communication plan?
- What methodologies will be used? (questionnaire, interviews, workshops)
- What is the scope of the project?
- What are the performance indicators that will be measured and compared?
- What are the good practice statements?
- What are the performance measures?
- What are the ratings?
- What is the rationale for the performance rating?
- Can you triangulate the data with other relevant data?
- Who are involved in the project? Who will coordinate the project and liaise with the benchmarking partners? What are the responsibilities of various people involved in the project?

3.6 **Stage 6 - Undertake a Self Review**

When undertaking an internal self review of the benchmarking activity consider:

- What are the areas of good practice?
- What are the areas for improvement?
- What actions will be taken to recognise good practice and improve practice?
• How will you report on the findings of the self review of the benchmarking activity?

3.7 Stage 7 - Undertake a Peer Review
When undertaking an external peer review of the benchmarking activity consider:

• What data and self review information will you share?
• Where and when the peer review will take place?
• Who will coordinate the peer review workshop?
• How will you report on the findings of the peer review?
• What actions will be taken from the peer review process?

3.8 Stage 8 - Implement the Potential Improvements
When implementing an action plan on potential improvements consider:

• What are the actions from the benchmarking activity?
• Who is responsible for carrying out these actions?
• Does it carry budget implications?
• What date will these actions be completed by?
• What was the outcome of these actions?
• What are the deliverables from the benchmarking activity?

3.9 Stage 9 - Report Results
When reporting results from the benchmarking activity consider:

• Who is responsible for reporting the results?
• Ensure all benchmarking activity has been reported to the Provost Office to place on the benchmarking register

4 Definitions and Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisational Unit</th>
<th>Faculty, School, Centre, University Institute, other University Entity, Division, Section or University Business Enterprise.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benchmarking</td>
<td>The systematic comparison of an organisation’s inputs, systems, processes and outputs both against those of external bodies and internally against previously collated in-house data</td>
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5 Supporting Documentation

• Benchmarking Policy
• Reviews Policy

6 Versioning

| Current Version | Version 1 – X Procedure; DRAFT - approved Month, 20xx; reviewed Month, 201x. |

Draft Benchmarking Procedure
Appendix A: Benchmarking Review Process

Stage 1: Scope the benchmarking activity - determine area, nature and level of benchmarking

Stage 2: Decide on type of benchmarking

Stage 3: Select and secure benchmarking partners

Stage 4: Consider the levels of approval and support

Stage 5: Do a project plan with defined methodology, responsibilities, timeline and budget

Stage 6: Undertake self review

Stage 7: Undertake peer review

Stage 8: Implement the potential improvements including measuring results

Identify areas of good practice and areas for improvement internally

Compare and identify areas of good practice and areas for improvement across institutions
Stage 9: Report results – closing the loop