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|  <p>S P Jain<br/>School of Global<br/>Management<br/>DUBAI • MUMBAI • SINGAPORE • SYDNEY</p> | <b>Benchmarking Policy and Procedures</b>  |
| Document Type   | Policy and Procedures  |
| Administering Entity  | Learning, Teaching and Quality Assurance Committee, Academic Regulations and Course Development Committee (ARCDC) , Director - Quality Assurance, Director Accreditation and Regulatory Compliance |
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\* Updated on August 25, 2021 for references to Threshold Standards 2021

## 1. Purpose

The Higher Education Threshold Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 requires higher education providers to compare their performance and offerings with other higher education providers (HEPs) on courses, student performance, teaching, student learning outcomes, graduate outcomes, and research (where applicable). This policy aims to ensure that S P Jain School of Global Management (S P Jain/the School) implements a practical approach to benchmarking activities that address these areas and allow for continuous improvement.

## 2. Definition

The TEQSA Guidance Note defines benchmarking as a structured, collaborative learning process for comparing practices, processes or performance outcomes. Its purpose is to identify comparative strengths and weaknesses, as a basis for developing improvements in academic quality or performance. Benchmarking can also be defined as a quality process used to evaluate performance by comparing institutional practices with identified good practices across the sector.

## 3. Benchmarking Principles and Process

- a. There are numerous ways to undertake benchmarking and the Threshold Standards 2021 do not prescribe any set processes to undertake.
- b. Benchmarking projects undertaken at S P Jain:
  - i. support the School's mission, goals and strategic priorities
  - ii. be balanced in terms of the value received compared to costs involved in undertaking the projects

- iii. have the approval of the Learning Teaching and Quality Assurance Committee or the Academic Regulations and Course Development Committee of the Academic Board (latter for new course development and current course re-accreditation).
- c. Benchmarking can be conducted internally where applicable between same units and courses taught across various campuses.
- d. Benchmarking is also to be carried out externally through partnerships with other institutions and reference to publicly available information.
- e. Benchmarking is done for both quantitative (e.g. attrition rates) as well as qualitative (e.g. course entry requirements) data.
- f. S P Jain's benchmarking processes follow the Plan, Implement, Review and Improve (PIRI) system.

#### **4. External Referencing**

- a. TEQSA defines external referencing as a process whereby a higher education provider compares an aspect of its operations with external comparators and the aim of external referencing as being to provide evidence:
  - of the quality of a provider's operations, and
  - to inform internal improvements.
- b. External referencing activities are undertaken at S P Jain to fulfil its quality assurance goals and maintain continuous improvement include benchmarking, peer review and moderation.
- c. S P Jain undertakes external referencing in order to:
  - Inform planning and goal setting
  - Improve decision-making
  - Inform S P Jain's policies
  - Improve S P Jain's procedures and guidelines, teaching and learning
  - Provide an evidence base for changes and improvement
  - Provide an external focus to internal activities.
- d. S P Jain undertakes external referencing activities in accordance with its:
  - Benchmarking Policy and Procedures
  - Admission Policies
  - Course Development, Review and Approval Policy
  - Quality Assurance Framework

## 5. Benchmarking focus areas

a. The following focus areas that can be considered but are not limited to:

- i. New Course Development
  - Course Design (credits, study mode, course learning outcomes)
  - Admissions criteria
  - Units content
  - Unit learning outcomes
  - Assessment tasks
- ii. Existing Course Review
  - Units content
  - Unit learning outcomes
  - Assessment tasks
  - Admission criteria
  - Students performance
  - Progression and completion rates
- iii. Student performance
  - Attrition and retention rates
  - Progress rates
  - Completion rates
  - Grade distributions
  - Academic Integrity
  - Student satisfaction
  - Graduate success
- iv. Teaching
  - Staff to student ratios
  - Staff qualifications and experience
  - Staff and student satisfaction
- v. Graduate outcomes
  - Course design
  - Peer review
  - Graduate and employer satisfaction
  - Graduate destinations
- vi. Research
  - Publications
  - Scholarly activity

## 6. Types of Benchmarking

### a. Internal desktop review

- i. Rigorous internal desktop review is used for a range of elements of its operations like:
  - Admission criteria
  - Cohort analyses by campus
  - Course performance outcomes
  - Student Performance outcomes
  - Research and scholarly activity outcomes
  - Learning resources
  - Teaching resources

### b. External with partners

- i. The School has a selected range Australian benchmarking partners that:
  - have a commitment to quality improvement and a 'willingness to share'
  - demonstrate a record of good performance in the areas to be benchmarked
  - have a similar discipline mix, and
  - have English as the primary language.
- ii. It has Memoranda of Understanding with some and less formal arrangements with others.
- iii. All existing and future benchmarking partners need to be approved by the Learning, Teaching and Quality Assurance Committee.

### c. Formal benchmarking groups

- ii. The School endeavours where practicable to participate in established benchmarking groups such as, but not limited to:
  - Independent Higher Education Australia (IHEA) benchmarking projects its Peer Review Portal and engages in one-off projects with other providers.
  - Quality Indicators of Learning and Teaching (QILT)
  - Helen Lawrence Consulting (HLC) Benchmarking Report

## 7. Reviewing and Implementing Outcomes

- a. Benchmarking findings and corrective plans will be reflected in relevant departmental and committee reports.
- b. The following steps are recommended actions to be taken once benchmarking information has been collected:
  - i. Identify areas of good practice and those that require attention
  - ii. Analyse reasons for any variation or commonality and address underlying reasons
  - iii. Formulate improvement strategies
  - iv. Report results and actions taken to appropriate department head or governing body including the Academic Board as part of course review processes
  - v. Review the outcomes of improvement strategies and share progress reports with the relevant department head or governing body

## **8. Reporting and record management**

- a. S P Jain requires benchmarking outcomes to be reported, recorded, shared appropriately and stored in a central Benchmarking archive.

## **9. Related Documents**

- a. Course Development Review and Approval Policy
- b. Quality Assurance Framework
- c. Student Performance Data Policy and Procedures
- d. Student Progression, Exclusion and Course Completion Policy
- e. Terms of Reference of the Academic Board and its sub-committees

### ***Acknowledgements:***

The development of this document has been informed by:

- TEQSA's Guidance Note: External Referencing (including Benchmarking)
- 'Benchmarking at the University of Adelaide':  
<https://www.adelaide.edu.au/learning/reviews/benchmarking/>