

 <p>SPJ GLOBAL</p> <p>S P Jain School of Global Management</p> <p>DUBAI • MUMBAI • SINGAPORE • SYDNEY</p>	Benchmarking Policy and Procedures
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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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1. Purpose

- a. 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

- a. 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:
 - i. **Plan:**
 - Identify the areas to be benchmarked / Identify external partners or institutions for benchmarking.
 - Define the objectives and scope of the benchmarking activity.
 - Select units or courses for comparison.
 - ii. **Implement:**
 - Collect relevant data from internal / external sources.
 - Analyse the data to identify strengths and weaknesses.
 - iii. **Review:**
 - Compare the findings with internal / external standards and objectives.
 - Identify areas for improvement.
 - iv. **Improve:**
 - Develop and implement improvement strategies.
 - Monitor progress and make necessary adjustments

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. Types of Benchmarking

a. Internal desktop review

- i. Internal desktop review is used for:
- Admission criteria
 - Cohort analyses by campus
 - Course performance outcomes
 - Student Performance outcomes
 - Research and scholarly activity outcomes
 - Learning resources
 - Teaching resources

b. Formal benchmarking groups

The School endeavours where practicable to participate in established benchmarking groups such as, but not limited to:

- Quality Indicators of Learning and Teaching (QILT)
- Helen Lawrence Consulting (HLC) Benchmarking Report
- Independent Higher Education Australia (IHEA) benchmarking projects its Peer Review Portal and engages in one-off projects with other providers.

6. Benchmarking focus areas

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

a. New Course Development ¹

- **Course Design:** Compare credits, study modes, learning outcomes, and alignment with industry standards.
- **Admission Criteria:** Evaluate competitiveness and accessibility of admission requirements.
- **Assessment Tasks:** Ensure alignment with course learning outcomes.

¹ In accordance with *Course Development, Review and Approval Policy*

b. Existing Course Review²

- **Content & Learning Outcomes:** Review course content and unit-level learning outcomes.
- **Assessment Tasks:** Ensure that assessments continue to align with course objectives.
- **Student Performance:** Measure against external data on attrition, retention, and completion.

c. Student Performance

- **Focus Areas:** Attrition, retention, progression rates, grade distributions, and academic integrity.
- The Deans will monitor and report student performance data on a periodic basis as requested by the Academic Board
- External benchmarking where viable with peer institutions or S P Jain campuses for comparison.

d. Teaching Quality

- **Focus Areas:** Staff qualifications, student-to-staff ratios, and satisfaction surveys.
- Annually compare staff qualifications, student ratios, and satisfaction results with external data (TEQSA Provider Risk Assessment).
- Compare staff qualifications periodically as requested by the Academic Board.

e. Graduate Outcomes

- **Focus Areas:** Graduate employment and satisfaction rates.
- Periodically benchmark graduate outcomes using QILT.

f. Research Outputs

- **Focus Areas:** Publications, scholarly activities, and research funding.
- Review research performance and compare with external data from academic institutions periodically, as requested by the Academic Board.

g. Peer Review of Assessment

- **Focus Areas:** Ensures alignment of learning outcomes, assessment tasks, and student work samples with external standards.
- Where practicable undertake external peer reviews via the peer review portal.

7. Reporting and Record Management

- **Quarterly Reports:** Internal benchmarking data, including student performance, is reported to the Learning, Teaching, and Quality Assurance Committee.
- **Annual Benchmarking Review:** A comprehensive report covering all benchmarking activities (internal and external) is prepared and submitted to the Academic Board.
- Summarised list of all benchmarking exercises will be recorded in a central Benchmarking Register.

² In accordance with *Course Development, Review and Approval Policy*

8. 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

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:

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