

BENCHMARKING PROCEDURE

Policy Code	GOV05
Policy Lead	Chief Executive Officer/Principal
Approving Authority	Board Of Directors
Approval date	12 December 2023
Commencement date	18 December 2023
Next Review Date	December 2026
Version	2023.1
Relevant legislation or external requirements	<p>National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code)</p> <p>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HESFs: 1.4.1, 1.4.3, 1.4.4, 5.3.1, 5.3.4, 5.3.7)</p> <p>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth) (ESOS Act)</p> <p>Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019 (Cth) (ESOS Regulations)</p> <p>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act)</p> <p>Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) requirements</p> <p>Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)</p>
Related ASA Documents	<p>Policy Framework</p> <p>Quality Assurance Framework</p> <p>Risk Management Framework</p> <p>Benchmarking Procedure</p>

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Procedure is to outline the processes and practices involved with Benchmarking Policy, the intent of which is to establish the requirements for external referencing and benchmarking of organisational practices and processes, academic material and delivery, and student experience and outcomes for continuous improvement and to meet best practices.

2. Scope

This Procedure applies to all staff, directors, officers, external appointees on any ASA board or committee, volunteers, and contractors.

3. Procedure

The following procedure outlines the steps involved in external referencing and benchmarking.

3.1 External referencing

External referencing involves comparing ASA operations, practices, and plans against other higher education providers or against external reference points.

External reference points may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF),
- b. Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) (HESFs),
- c. Codes of Practice,
- d. Course and Unit Learning Outcomes of other providers,

- e. Professional accreditation standards and requirements; and
- f. Operational processes.

3.1.1 Steps in External Referencing of the ASA as a whole include:

- a. ASA will identify necessary areas for external benchmarking and arrange partnerships with other higher education providers. These will link to the Quality Assurance Framework elements.
- b. Liaise with partners to set parameters of benchmarking, such as:
 - i. Establishing which institution will take the lead and carry out data analysis;
 - ii. The level of confidentiality and anonymity of data;
 - iii. Establishing what data will be used, how it will be analysed and how it will be segmented and shared; and
 - iv. Set and agree on timeframes and tasks to be completed.
- b. Request approval from relevant approving authority to carry benchmarking within the agreed parameters with consideration of confidentiality and competitive advantage.
- c. Report on benchmark outcomes with all benchmarking partners. Permission from all participating partners must be received before sharing reports with external or publicly.
 - i. Once reports have been agreed upon between all partners, the report will be submitted to the appropriate governance committee/s for action and approval.
 - ii. Development of actions plans and recommendations for quality assurance and continuous improvements should be submitted to the appropriate governance committee/s for approval.
- d. Monitoring of the implementation of actions and recommendations should be carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies or interventions.

3.1.2 Steps in External Referencing of ASA courses

- a. External Referencing of ASA courses will be conducted on a regular basis of a cycle of five years or within two years of re-accreditation which forms a Comprehensive Course Review. This will include:
 - i. Establish Partnership agreements;
 - ii. Establish proposed referencing activities;
 - iii. Establish how referencing activities are to be completed; and
 - iv. Proposed timeframes.
- c. Receive approval for benchmarking activities from the approving authority within the agreed parameters with consideration of confidentiality and competitive advantage.
- d. Course materials will be selected, prepared, and provided to the partners for benchmarking.
- e. Reviewers should be provided templates to complete responses to the benchmarking tasks.
- f. Report on benchmark results with all benchmarking partners. Permission from all participating partners must be received before sharing reports with external or publicly.
 - i. Once reports have been agreed upon between all partners, the report will be submitted to the appropriate governance committee/s for action and approval.

- ii. Development of actions plans and recommendations for quality assurance and continuous improvements should be submitted to the appropriate governance committee/s for approval.
- g. Monitoring of the implementation of actions and recommendations should be carried out evaluate the effectiveness of strategies or interventions.

3.2 Benchmarking

ASA follows the six phases of benchmarking to investigate the interaction of processes and outcomes.

- a. Concept - deciding what type of benchmarking to use, how to undertake it and with whom.
- b. Plan and design – establishing benchmarking objectives, scope, schedule, allocation of tasks, timelines and deliverables.
- c. Self-review – planning self-review activities, identifying key stakeholders, writing up institutional context statements for peer review workshop, collecting evidence and gathering data from a range of sources, e.g. surveys, interviews, focus groups.
- d. Peer review – benchmarking with peer review activities to identify areas of good practice, improvement, sharing and collaboration.
- e. Communicate and implement improvements – communicating and reporting findings from the peer review activities to appropriate governing bodies for approval and implementing of improvements.
- f. Evaluate and review – evaluation of the benchmarking process to identify what were the outcomes, how useful were they and were they implemented.

3.3 Responsibilities

The Board of Directors and Academic Board are responsible for leading the key strategy of institutional organisational change and approval of benchmarking and external referencing activities, implementation of improvements.

The Senior Executive Management team are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of improvements after approval.

The Director Quality and Compliance will review policy requirements and ensure all benchmarking requirements are carried out in a timely fashion.

4. Version Control

This Procedure has been reviewed and approved by the Australian School of Accounting Board of Directors as at December 2023 and is reviewed every three years.

The Procedure, with associated Policy, are published and available on the Australian School of Accounting website <https://www.asahe.edu.au/policies-and-forms/>.

Change and Version Control				
Version	Authored	Brief Description of the changes	Date Approved:	Effective Date:
2023.1	Director Learning and Innovation	New procedure to supplement the associated policy.	12/12/2023	18/12/2023