

Developing T&L Benchmarking Partnerships in Engineering Education

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Benchmarking:

1. Comparison against best-in-class; superb way to spark new ideas & significant insights when examples are selected with thought & imagination;

Benchmarking:

2. The basis for great jobs where incumbents have no substantive responsibilities other than to gallivant around the world, meet all sorts of interesting people, make occasional proclamations about the neat things others do, and submit lavish expense reports

(E. Shapiro, 1995. *Fad Surfing in the Board Room*. p213.)

TIF project goal -

Creation of benchmarking partnerships with GO8 Engineering faculties to examine the development, delivery and management of undergraduate T&L services

Why Benchmarking?

- Faculty T&L improvement
- AB review recommendations
- Desire to learn from others
- Better understand our Faculty situation & dynamics

Benchmarking What?

- Issues, processes, practices
- Areas of interest -
 - T&L strategy, policy & planning
 - Communications with students
 - T&L environment
 - Fitness of program
 - T&L QA practices
 - Student retention, progress & satisfaction

Student retention, progress & satisfaction

- Progression &/or Satisfaction Data
- Faculty &/or School/department support mechanisms & programs for students

T&L QA practices

- Existing QA systems
- Impact of QA

Fitness of program

- Curriculum development & Stakeholder input
- Staff and student understanding of the discipline
- Student experience - T&L, professional

T&L environment

- T&L workloads
- T&L development
- Teaching Assessment & Audit

T&L strategy, policy & planning

- T&L committee - composition, role, operations
- T&L Planning - development & implementation
- T&L issues - identification, management, resolution

Communications with students

- Student induction & orientation
- Information available to students
- Student / Staff interaction

Benchmarking How?

- Relationship development - targets or partners?
- Information gathering & reliability - quantitative & qualitative
- Benchmarking process development
- Benchmarking instrument development

Benchmarking process development

- Commitment to ethical partnerships
- Relationship development - UQ, Melbourne
- Collaborative Action Research model of change
- Qualitative - professional reflection - deep indicators
- Quantitative - subjective ranking - shallow indicators

Benchmarking Instrument development

- Identification of areas of interest
- Features of good T&L practice in each area
- Specific investigative & reflective questions for each area of interest
- Benchmarking level scale for areas of interest

Benchmarking Results ? Sydney-

- Strengths - T&L committee, strategy & planning, QA, curriculum development
- Weaknesses - T&L environment, communication with students

Benchmarking Outcomes/Learning?

- Success of benchmarking process
- Commitment of partners to GO3 benchmarking roundtable
- Impetus and confidence for internal change-
 - Standard UoS outlines, GA mapping, grade descriptors
 - Student communication - T&L database

Benchmarking Challenges?

- Sustain the momentum as normal practice
- Sustain culture and practice improvement
- Expand to international partners