



UNIVERSITY
OF BAHRAIN

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

BENCHMARKING POLICY

Authority / Owner of Policy: Quality Assurance and Accreditation Center

Effective: 25/03/2015

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BENCHMARKING POLICY

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| Title: | Benchmarking Policy |
| Policy Description: | This policy describes the University's approach to referencing its practices, processes or performance outcomes with similar institutions, to achieve continuous improvement. |
| Policy Scope: | <input type="checkbox"/> Academic <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative <input type="checkbox"/> Research <input type="checkbox"/> Student <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General |
| Policy Status | <input type="checkbox"/> New policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revision of existing policy |
| Approval Authority: | University of Bahrain Council |
| Authority/ Owner of Policy: | Quality Assurance and Accreditation Center |
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| Related Documents: | Quality Assurance Policy |

Policy Stakeholders

- President
- Vice President
- Legal Advisor
- Deans
- Directors
- Faculty members

- Students
- Admin Staff
- All University Affiliates

1 Definitions

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| Benchmarking: | the practice of comparing operations, performances, academic programs, and legislation with comparable national, regional, and international institutions. |
| Comparable institutions: | institutions similar to the University in a variety of aspects such as but not limited to the mission, size, programs, disciplines, cultural similarity. |
| Parties undertaking the benchmarking: | staff responsible for conducting the benchmarking as well as the executive individuals responsible for implementing and monitoring the action plans deriving from the benchmarking activity. |

2 Policy Purpose

The purpose of the Benchmarking Policy is to provide a systematic approach to ensure that the University's performance and practices are per national, regional and international standards.

2.1 The objectives of benchmarking are to:

- Ensure that operations, performances, legislations are in line with local, regional and international standards and best practices;
- Promote a culture of continuous improvement across the University.

- Inform decision-making, planning and goal settings by drawing on comparisons with reference data.

3 Policy Scope

- 3.1 The Benchmarking Policy applies to formal and informal benchmarking activities initiated across the University.
- 3.2 Formal benchmarking, which requires a formal request of information from external entities, must be approved by the University Council, whether a monetary fund is required or not.

4 Policy Statement

- 4.1 The University supports benchmarking with comparable national, regional and international institutions as a way of identifying strengths and weaknesses, improving performance and assuring quality and best practices.
- 4.2 The principles underpinning the University's Benchmarking Policy are as follow:
 - Benchmarking must support the University's Mission, Vision, Strategic Goals and Initiatives.
 - Benchmarking must be a balanced activity in terms of cost and benefit (monetary cost, resources, staff working hours, etc.).
 - The parties undertaking the benchmarking process should be committed to learn from best practices and to recognize strengths and weaknesses in the current system objectively.
 - The parties undertaking the benchmarking process should be committed to implementing improvement plans which might derive from the benchmarking exercise.

5 Code of Conduct

5.1 Whenever an exchange of information is involved, the following should be adhered to:

- **Confidentiality:** Benchmarking must be treated as a confidential activity. Benchmarking findings should not be published or communicated to external entities without the permission of the University.
- **Use:** Benchmarking information must not be used for any other purposes other than the stated objectives for which the benchmarking activity was initiated for.
- **Agreement:** For formal benchmarking involving a formal request of information from external entities, an agreement should be signed, stating the type and level of information to be exchanged, confidentiality and use of benchmarking data and findings.

6 Policy Procedures

6.1 Benchmark Process

The parties undertaking the benchmarking activity should:

6.1.1 Plan

- Set responsibilities, deliverables and deadlines.
- Establish objectives, expectations and scope of the benchmarking activity.
- Adopt clear performance indicators and measures upon which significant comparisons are made.
- Identify comparable institutions against which to benchmark the chosen indicators.

6.1.2 Data Collection and Analysis

- Identify strengths and weaknesses in the current system.

- Identify best practices and opportunities to improve current practices accordingly.
- Consider cost and benefit of undertaking enhancements.

6.1.3 Communicate Findings

Communicate findings and seek the agreement of next steps to relevant Senior Management.

6.1.4 Action

- Develop action plans with clear responsibilities and timeframes to address gaps in the system or improve current practices.
- Implement an action plan and monitor their progress.