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BENCHMARKING POLICY

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Background and Context

The Excelsia College recognises and accepts its obligation to ensure high standards of performance in teaching, learning, research and academic governance. Benchmarking with appropriate partners enables the College to compare and evaluate its performance and, in so doing, monitor standards, support good practice and make systematic quality improvements. As such, Excelsia encourages benchmarking with comparable institutions as a means of improving performance and assuring standards.

This Policy aims to support a coherent, coordinated, and considered approach to benchmarking that is integrated with institutional planning, the establishment of performance goals and targets, and ongoing processes within the College's quality improvement system.

Scope

This policy applies to benchmarking projects undertaken by the College as a whole and by its individual Schools. The Policy covers benchmarking projects initiated within the College, as well as external benchmarking projects in which the College is involved.

Supervision

The Director of Quality is responsible for monitoring, coordinating and providing operational advice on benchmarking projects and activities.

Benchmarking Principles

Benchmarking projects undertaken by the College and any individual Schools will:

1. serve the mutual interests and benefits of all parties;

2. support the College's mission, vision, values, goals and strategic priorities;

3. have defined goals, outcomes, and activities;

4. be oriented towards learning from good practice and quickly implementing potential improvements;

5. be cost effective in terms of both time and required resources;

6. establish procedures regarding the exchange, use, and publication of information, where possible, be conducted with partners that:

    (a) have compatible missions, visions, values and objectives;
    (b) are of comparable size; and
    (c) have a similar mix of disciplines, degrees and academic activities.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

All benchmarking projects will be governed by an MOU that specifies:

1. the aims and scope of the benchmarking project;

2. the extent to which data will be shared between the partners;

3. the extent of confidentiality with those not party to the agreement. In particular, there is a need for confidentiality when there are 'commercial in confidence' situations between partners;

4. how the partners will agree the area(s) for potential improvement;

5. how the parties will handle any publications emerging from the benchmarking, including limits on the publication of outcomes;

6. a process to allow either partner to withdraw from the benchmarking project if there is:

(a) a change in strategic priorities,

(b) an emerging situation that brings the benchmarking partners into competition, or

(c) a turnover of staff which changes available staff resources and expertise.

Implementing and Communicating Findings

1. The College encourages the production of benchmarking reports that can be included in the Benchmarking Register for the benefit of the College as a whole.

2. Project findings and implementation plans will be discussed in relevant committees, and will be noted in committee minutes and reports.

3. Implementation plans should describe the actions arising from benchmarking reports, including the identification of responsibilities, resources and timelines.

4. Progress against implementation plans will be regularly monitored. Progress towards implementing improvements based on benchmarking projects, and their effect on outcomes, will also be made public as appropriate.