

 S P Jain London School of Management	Benchmarking Policy and Procedures
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1. **Purpose**

This policy describes SP Jain London School of Management's (SPJUK's) approach to benchmarking its academic performance against other institutions as a means of assuring the quality of its provision and promoting continuous improvement.

2. **Definition**

At its simplest, benchmarking is "about making comparisons with other departments or organizations and then learning the lessons that those comparisons throw up". ([The European Benchmarking Code of Conduct](#)).

3. **Benchmarking Principles and Process**

- a. SPJUK aims to assure academic standards through a process of collaborative sharing of expertise, identifying good practice and avenues for evidence-based continuous improvement. Benchmarking is, therefore, a key component of SPJUK's pursuit of innovative change and its quality assurance framework.
- b. SPJUK manages the quality of its academic provision and monitors the effective and appropriate discharge of its responsibilities for academic standards through the implementation of approved policies and procedures. In developing benchmarking policies, the [QAA Quality Code](#) and [Subject Benchmark Statements](#), and international developments such as the [Standards and Guidelines for QA in the European HE Area](#) are used as guidelines.
- c. Benchmarking projects undertaken at SPJUK:
 - i. support the School's mission, goals and strategic priorities
 - ii. are balanced in terms of the value received compared to costs involved in undertaking the projects
 - iii. are overseen by the Academic Board or the Programme Development & Review Committee (PRDC) where it relates to new programme development and current programme re-accreditation.
- d. Benchmarking may be carried out externally through partnerships with other institutions and with reference to publicly available information.

- e. Benchmarking is done for both quantitative (e.g. retention rates) as well as qualitative (e.g. programme entry requirements) data.
- f. SPJUK's benchmarking processes follow a Plan, Implement, Review and Improve (PIRI) System as outlined in the Quality Assurance Framework.

4. **External Referencing**

- a. External referencing is a process whereby a higher education provider compares an aspect of its operations with external comparators and the aim of referencing is to provide evidence:
 - of the quality of a provider's operations, and
 - to inform internal improvements.
- b. External referencing activities are undertaken at SPJUK to fulfil its quality assurance goals and maintain continuous improvement including benchmarking, peer review and moderation.
- c. SPJUK undertakes external referencing in order to:
 - Inform planning and goal setting
 - Improve decision-making
 - Inform institutional policies
 - Improve institutional procedures and guidelines, teaching and learning
 - Provide an evidence base for changes and improvement
 - Provide an external focus to internal activities.
- d. SPJUK undertakes external referencing activities in accordance with its:
 - Benchmarking Policy and Procedures
 - Admissions Policy
 - Programme Development, Review and Approval Policy

5. **Benchmarking focus areas**

- a. The following focus areas, which are aligned with external reference points including OfS's Condition B3 on [Student Outcomes](#), can be considered but are not limited to:
 - i. Programmes
 - Design (study mode, outcomes)
 - Admissions criteria
 - Assessment tasks
 - ii. Student performance
 - Retention rates
 - Progress rates
 - Completion rates
 - iii. Teaching
 - Staff to student ratios
 - Staff qualifications and experience
 - Staff and student satisfaction

iv. Student learning outcomes

- Programme design
- Peer review
- Assessment results
- Staff and student satisfaction

v. Graduate outcomes

- Programme design
- Peer review
- Graduate and employer satisfaction
- Graduate destinations, e.g., progression into managerial or professional employment
- Progression to further study

vi. Research

- Publications
- Scholarly activity

6. **Types of Benchmarking**

a. **Internal desktop review**

i. Internal desktop review is used to analyse:

- Admission criteria
- Cohort analyses
- Programme performance outcomes
- Research and scholarly activity outcomes
- Learning resources
- Teaching resources

b. **External with partners**

i. The School will select benchmarking partners that:

- have a commitment to quality improvement and a 'willingness to share'
- demonstrate a record of good performance in the areas to be benchmarked
- have a similar discipline mix, and
- have English as the primary language.

ii. All existing and future benchmarking partners need to be approved by the Academic Board.

c. **Formal benchmarking groups**

The School endeavours where practicable to participate in established benchmarking groups in the United Kingdom.

7. Reviewing and Implementing Outcomes

- a. Benchmarking findings and corrective plans will inform 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 programme review processes
 - v. Review the outcomes of improvement strategies and share progress reports with the relevant department head and Academic Board.

8. Related Documents

- a. Terms of Reference of the Academic Board and its sub-committees
- b. Quality Assurance Framework

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