



**IONA COLLEGE**  
TRINITY

TEQSA Provider ID PRV14376 • CRICOS Provider Code 04294D

## Benchmarking Policy and Procedure

*Approved by the Academic Board on 19 October 2021*

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## 1. Purpose

This Benchmarking Policy and Procedure sets out the approach that Iona Trinity College of Higher Education Pty Ltd (**the College**) will adopt towards benchmarking its operations and activities.

By comparing how it operates with others in the higher education sector, the College can maintain and improve on the way it operates.

## 2. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- All college staff, academic and corporate (full-time, part-time, casual or contract)
- Members of all governing bodies
- All TEQSA accredited courses

## 3. Policy

To ensure the College operates consistent with sector best practice, a range of benchmarking activities will be undertaken to compare with other similar providers, the following matters:

- student outcomes
- course structure and content
- processes, resources and structures (operational and governance).

The results from benchmarking will be used as part of continuous improvement; to improve the student experience through changes in teaching and learning, governance and operations.

### 3.1 Type of benchmarking

The College may undertake benchmarking with similar providers on the following aspects of its operations:

- **Course** – course structure and content, entry criteria, learning outcomes and assessment methods
- **Policies and frameworks** – comparing academic and non-academic policies
- **Process** – comparison of particular processes and practices, e.g. complaint resolution time
- **Student outcomes** – comparing outcomes data, e.g. student attrition, progression, completion
- **Structures** – comparing company structure, e.g. academic staffing, corporate services, governance

Benchmarking can be undertaken through:

- **Desktop audits** – audit of publicly available information and data, including but not limited to:
  - Providers' websites

- Higher education data from the Department of Education, Skills and Employment
- Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT)
- **Formal arrangement** – formalising a benchmarking agreement:
  - With a provider offering courses in similar disciplines
  - Through participating with QILT or similar industry/sector collaboration (e.g. the Higher Education Private Provider – Quality Network or the Council of Deans of Theology)

## 4. Procedure

Benchmarking will be conducted according to the following stages:

**Step 1** – identifying areas for improvement and/or good practice, e.g. entry requirements, course learning outcomes

**Step 2** – define the type of and method for benchmarking, e.g. course benchmarking using a provider's website

**Step 3** – confirm availability of staff with relevant knowledge and skills for the benchmarking exercise

**Step 4** – if required, receive approval from the Academic Board (**AB**) for a formal benchmarking arrangement

**Step 5** – report benchmarking outcomes to management or relevant governing body, including identifying improvement plans

Appendix 1 provides a schedule of benchmarking activities.

## 5. Responsibilities

The AB is responsible for:

- Setting institutional benchmarks for academic quality and outcomes
- Monitoring the implementation of actions taken to improve the College's operations.

The Principal is responsible for:

- Overseeing benchmarking activities
- Reporting to the AB on outcomes from benchmarking, including recommending actions for improvement.

All staff are responsible for:

- Undertaking benchmarking activities in accordance with this policy, when requested
- Awareness of developments in benchmarking practices
- Implementing improvements arising from benchmarking in their areas of responsibility.

## 6. Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy and Procedure, the following terms are defined as follows:

Benchmarking	A structured and collaborative quality assurance process for comparing practices, processes or performance outcomes
Governing body	Includes the Board of Directors and the AB, and any other committees established under the Iona Trinity College of Higher Education Governance Framework
Provider	A TEQSA-registered "institute of higher education"

## 7. Version history

Version #	Changes	Approval Body	Approval Date
1.0	Original Version	Academic Board	19/10/21

## 8. Additional Information

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Policy Status	Approved
Policy Owner	Principal
Next Review Date	3 years from Approval Date
Associated Internal Documents	Quality Assurance Framework
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021	Standards 1.4.1, 5.3.1, 5.3.4, 6.3.1b and 6.3.2e
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018	No relevant standard
Other Applicable Legislation and Instruments	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011

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## Appendix 1 – Schedule of benchmarking activities

Type	Objective of benchmarking	Frequency	Type of benchmarking	Responsible officer	Responsible body
<b>Course</b>	Course reviews including course and unit design, entry criteria, learning outcomes, assessment	Annual review Comprehensive review (refer to the <i>Course Monitoring and Review Policy and Procedure</i> )	Desktop audit Formal arrangement	Principal	Academic Board
<b>Course</b>	Delivery, including technology-enhanced learning, work-integrated learning, availability of learning/library resources and learning support	Comprehensive review	Desktop audit Formal arrangement	Principal	Academic Board
<b>Policies and frameworks</b>	Academic and non-academic	At least once every two years		Principal	Academic Board Board of Directors
<b>Process</b>	Academic misconduct cases, type, frequency	At least once every two years	Formal arrangement	Principal	Academic Board
<b>Process</b>	Grievances and appeals, number, type, days to resolution, number of external appeals	At least once every two years	Formal arrangement	Principal	Academic Board Board of Directors
<b>Process</b>	SASH incidents, number, type, days to resolution, number of external appeals	At least once every two years	Formal arrangement	Principal	Board of Directors
<b>Process</b>	Student recruitment, source countries, market trends	At least once every two years	Formal arrangement	Principal	Board of Directors

Type	Objective of benchmarking	Frequency	Type of benchmarking	Responsible officer	Responsible body
<b>Structures</b>	Academic appointments including staff qualifications, professional development and promotion processes	At least once every two years	Desktop audit Formal arrangement	Principal	Academic Board Board of Directors
<b>Structures</b>	Academic staff-to-student ratio	At least once every two years	Desktop audit Formal arrangement	Principal	Academic Board Board of Directors
<b>Structures</b>	Wellbeing and safety provisions and support services, including professional staff to student ratio	At least once every two years	Desktop audit Formal arrangement	Principal	Board of Directors
<b>Structures</b>	Facilities, resources and infrastructure	At least once every two years	Desktop audit Formal arrangement	Principal	Board of Directors
<b>Structures</b>	Governance bodies structure and Terms of Reference	At least once every two years	Desktop audit Formal arrangement	Principal	Board of Directors
<b>Structures</b>	Monitoring quality assurance mechanisms	At least once every two years	Desktop audit Formal arrangement	Principal	Academic Board Board of Directors
<b>Structures</b>	Approach to student representation and involvement in deliberative decision making	At least once every two years	Desktop audit Formal arrangement	Principal	Academic Board Board of Directors
<b>Student outcomes</b>	Student performance such as grade distribution, progression rates, retention rates, attrition rates and completion rates.	Annually	Desktop audit Formal arrangement	Principal	Academic Board Board of Directors

Type	Objective of benchmarking	Frequency	Type of benchmarking	Responsible officer	Responsible body
<b>Student outcomes</b>	Student feedback and satisfaction	Annually	Desktop audit Formal arrangement	Principal Academic teaching staff	Academic Board Board of Directors
<b>Student outcomes</b>	Moderation, e.g. external double marking of samples of assessment items	At the end of each semester	Formal arrangement	Principal Academic teaching staff	Academic Board
<b>Student outcomes</b>	Graduate outcomes, graduate course satisfaction, graduate employment and further study	Annually	Desktop audit Formal arrangement	Principal	Academic Board Board of Directors