

Benchmarking – a means to facilitate strategic improvements to an engineering program

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OVERVIEW OF WORKSHOP

In the Engineers Australia Accreditation Management System, benchmarking is defined as the means to facilitate strategic improvements to an engineering program and comply with Higher Education Standards (Engineers Australia, 2017). Benchmarking is included as suggested evidence of attainment of an appropriate approach to program and curriculum design (Academic Program criteria 2 - AP2). Criteria AP2 is just one of the 15 criteria against which engineering education programs are assessed for the purposes of accreditation. Benchmarking itself is also explicitly specified (QS5) in the set of five Quality Systems criteria of the Accreditation Management System (Engineers Australia, 2019).

ACTIVITIES

This workshop will explore the different aspects of benchmarking, including the different levels required for each aspect of the accreditation process. Participants will be able to work through real-world benchmarking examples and how to reference benchmarking done for other purposes (eg. TEQSA). Participants are welcome to contact the organisers to discuss the opportunity to use their example as a case study.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The audience for this workshop is expected to be academics and learning and teaching designers interested in understanding the best practice approaches for benchmarking. It is expected that participants would have some understanding of the accreditation process.

OUTCOMES

Engineers Australia is the only authorised entity in Australia to deliver accreditation as a signatory to the International Engineering Alliance, specifically through the Washington, Sydney and Dublin Accords for the levels of Professional Engineer, Engineering Technologist and Engineering Associate, respectively. The purpose of this workshop is to explore benchmarking in the context of the accreditation of a program that produces graduate professional engineers.

REFERENCES

Engineers Australia. (2019). Accreditation Criteria User Guide – Higher Education AMS-MAN-10. <https://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/sites/default/files/2022-07/accreditation-criteria-guide-higher-education.pdf>

Engineers Australia. (2017). Accreditation Standard – Higher Education AMS-STD-10. <https://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/sites/default/files/2022-07/accreditation-management-system-2019-accreditation-standard-higher-education.pdf>

KEYWORDS Benchmarking, accreditation

PRESENTERS' BACKGROUNDS

The presenters for this workshop have experience in engineering education across many decades and also in the Engineers Australia accreditation process. To support academics in addressing the benchmarking required for accreditation, a working group was established in 2023 with representatives from ten universities. This workshop will present the outputs, outcomes and insights of this working group and collate the experiences of education providers.