

WORKSHOP

Benchmarking – a means to achieve continual improvements to an engineering program

Helen Fairweather^a, Siva Krishnan^b, and Fidelis Mashiri^c
Engineers Australia^a, Deakin University^b, Western Sydney University^c
Corresponding Facilitator's Email: hfairweather@engineersaustralia.org.au

WORKSHOP MODE Confirmed **in-person**.

OVERVIEW OF WORKSHOP

The International Engineering Alliance Graduate Attributes and Professional Competencies (GAPCs) provide an international benchmark for entry-to-practice to the engineering profession at the Engineering Associate, Engineering Technologist and Professional Engineer levels. Engineers Australia entry-to-practice competencies (previously known as stage 1 competency standards) are benchmarked to the GAPCs. Accreditation of engineering degrees, conducted by Engineers Australia, is one of the mechanisms for ensuring that programs are meeting these entry-to-practice competency outcomes. Benchmarking is an important part of the accreditation assessment process, but more importantly provides a mechanism for continuous improvement of engineering programs. Therefore, benchmarking is more than the comparison of data; it is a process of continuously monitoring and evaluating the quality and effectiveness of a provider's operations.

For benchmarking to be a key strategy for institutional organisational change, it needs to be endorsed and supported by senior executive leadership. For benchmarking exercises to be truly successful, there also has to be a bottom-up empowerment where there is sharing of expertise.

ACTIVITIES

In this workshop participants will trial a benchmarking tool that has been developed by the Australian Engineering Accreditation Centre. The design of this tool is informed by the accreditation benchmarking working group and the outputs of the benchmarking workshop held at AAEE 2023. The tool will simulate several benchmarking activities that can be conducted to meet the accreditation criteria. Importantly the simulation activities will also demonstrate how the benchmarking activities contribute to a continuous improvement cycle for the engineering curriculum.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience includes academics involved in the professional accreditation process for engineering education.

OUTCOMES

Participants in this workshop will develop a deep appreciation of the benchmarking requirements for accreditation and learn how to use the benchmarking activities for a continuous improvement cycle.

KEYWORDS

Benchmarking, accreditation

PRESENTERS' BACKGROUNDS

A/Profs Siva Krishnan and Fidelis Mashiri are engineering academics at Deakin and Western Sydney Universities, respectively. Dr Helen Fairweather is the Head of Accreditation with Engineers Australia.