

External Referencing and Benchmarking Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 The External Referencing and Benchmarking Policy establishes the principles that underpin external referencing and benchmarking activities at AIAT, including the design, conduct and evaluation of external referencing and benchmarking projects. These projects are focused on ensuring academic quality and industry best practice and to encourage continuous improvement practice across all AIAT activities. This policy should be read in conjunction with the External Referencing and Benchmarking Procedure.
- 1.2 This policy is not utilised when measuring the progress of corporate and academic KPIs.
- 1.3 This policy applies to all AIAT staff and all members of Boards and Committees included in external referencing and benchmarking activities.

2. Definitions

Refer to *Glossary of Terms* for commonly used terms. The definitions below are included for clarity.

Benchmarking – A structured, collaborative learning process for comparing practices, processes or performance outcomes with other organisations.

External Referencing – A process through which AIAT compares an aspect of its operations with an external comparator. Typical techniques include benchmarking, peer review and moderation.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 AIAT is committed to ensuring the high quality and rigour of its higher education operations and course delivery through regular external referencing and benchmarking activities.
- 3.2 Regular and credible external referencing and benchmarking activities are undertaken by AIAT. These activities encompass corporate and academic standards and performance, and findings are used to improve its institutional policies, processes, systems and practices.
- 3.3 Accredited courses, including expected student learning outcomes and methods of assessment, are benchmarked based on a cyclical review. This review includes external referencing activities consisting of academic and non-academic related areas.
- 3.4 Student achievement of expected learning outcomes and Graduate Attributes is monitored and regularly reviewed against comparable courses.

4. Policy Principles

- 4.1 External referencing and benchmarking activities are conducted regularly, systematically and transparently.
- 4.2 External referencing and benchmarking activities are designed to:
 - 4.2.1 support the achievement of AIAT's strategic objectives;
 - 4.2.2 identify strengths, weaknesses, risk and opportunities;
 - 4.2.3 inform AIAT of higher education industry best practice; and
 - 4.2.4 result in institutional improvements.
- 4.3 Outcomes of external referencing and benchmarking activities are systematically incorporated into AIAT's continuous improvement processes.
- 4.4 Adequate resources including administrative and management support for external referencing and benchmarking activities are made available.

5. Roles and responsibilities

- 5.1 The Board of Directors;
 - 5.1.1 Oversees institutional quality assurance and approves institutional corporate benchmarks;
 - 5.1.2 Receives reports on the suitability of AIAT's standards and its performance against set benchmarks;
 - 5.1.3 Approves the annual benchmarking program based on the recommendation of the Executive Management Group and the Academic Board; and
 - 5.1.4 Requests ad hoc external referencing and/or benchmarking activities based on the recommendation of the Executive Management Group or the Quality, Audit and Risk Committee.
- 5.2 The Academic Board:
 - 5.2.1 Recommends annual benchmarking program to Board of Directors;
 - 5.2.2 Requests ad hoc external referencing and/or benchmarking activities based on the recommendation of the Learning and Teaching Committee; and
 - 5.2.3 Oversees and monitors institutional benchmarks for academic quality and outcomes.
- 5.3 The Learning and Teaching Committee is responsible for:
 - 5.3.1 recommending, monitoring, and evaluating academic external referencing activities; and
 - 5.3.2 making recommendations for improvement on institutional standards and comparative performance.
- 5.4 The Executive Management Group is responsible for:
 - 5.4.1 recommending, monitoring, and evaluating non-academic external referencing and benchmarking activities; and
 - 5.4.2 making recommendations for improvement on institutional standards and comparative performance with similar providers.

- 5.5 The Director, Quality Assurance and Risk Management is responsible for coordinating external referencing and benchmarking activities in accordance with AIAT governing bodies' direction and guidance.

6. Policy Details

Institution	Australian Institute of Advanced Technologies (AIAT)
Policy name	External Referencing and Benchmarking Policy
Policy Reference No.	POL – 09
Policy Approval	Board of Directors in consultation with Academic Board regarding academic matters
Policy Authority	Executive Management Group
Responsible Officer	Director, Quality Assurance and Risk Management
Governance Reference Threshold Standards	HESF 2021: 5.3.1, 5.3.4, 5.3.7, 6.3.1.b
Related Documents	Course and Subject Lifecycle: Proposal and Development Policy Course and Subject Lifecycle: Review, Monitoring and Change Policy External Referencing and Benchmarking Procedure Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy Student Survey and Feedback Policy
Related Legislation	Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HESF)
References	AIAT has referred and benchmarked with the following institutions and policies during the creation of this policy: Central Queensland University (2021) External Referencing and Benchmarking Policy and Procedure IIET (2020) Benchmarking Policy
Date of approval	3 February 2022
Review date	December 2026
Policy Category	Governance

6. Document Version Control

Document No	POL – 09	Last Modify Date	Summary of Changes
Version No	1.0	NA	Initial version approved by Board of Directors
	1.01	31/3/2022	Removed policies that don't exist
Created Date	Feb 2022		