

Subject	Maintaining Quality within the Institution
Module	External Reference: Benchmarking and Quality Agency Audit
Topic	4.1 Overview

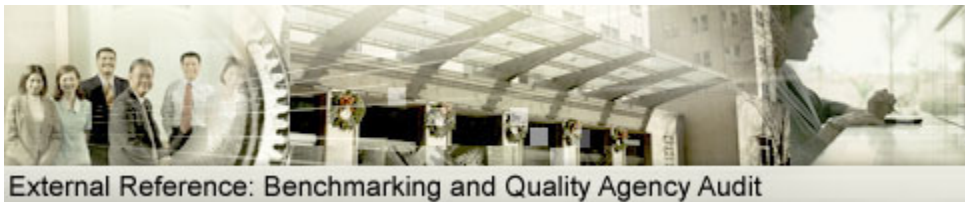
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1. Introduction



This module, *External Reference: Benchmarking and Quality Agency Audit*, discusses the difference between comparison and benchmarking and describes the development and considerations of standards. It also discusses the external quality agency process.

2. Module Overview

Let us review the topics we will cover in this module.

External Reference: Benchmarking and Quality Agency Audit – Overview

Benchmarking

This topic, **Benchmarking**, discusses the difference between comparison and benchmarking including choosing institutions or sub-areas for information comparison and for benchmarking. There is also consideration of standards.

Quality Agency Audit

This topic, **Quality Agency Audit**, discusses the external quality agency process: self-review; development of the Portfolio and Supplementary Materials; Trial Audits; briefing and de-briefing interviewees; the Audit visit schedule; Audit interviews; monitoring the audit process including in and out of scope questions; verbal feedback; responding to the draft report; developing and monitoring the action plan; internal and external communication.

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3. Objectives

Objectives: External Reference: Benchmarking and Quality Agency Audit

Upon completion of this module, you should be able to

- identify the difference between benchmarking activity and information comparison
- discuss the external quality agency process

4. Reading

Reading: General Reading and References

- Bogan, C. E. & English, M J (1994). *Benchmarking for Best Practices: Winning Through Innovative Adaption*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Harris, R. & Webb, G (2010). [Auditors' perspectives on Quality in Higher Education](#). In S. Nair, L. Webster & P. Mertova eds (2010.) *Leadership and Management of Quality in Higher Education* Chapter 7, 109-119. Cambridge UK: Woodhead Publishing Ltd.