

Benchmarking in Higher Education – International Benchmarking Conference
on the 13th and 14th of September 2012 in Hannover:

Comparing, Assessing, Discussing & Learning from one another

Benchmarking is gaining importance as a support tool for higher education and research institutions in their quality management efforts and organizational development. Numerous benchmarking projects have recently been initiated throughout the academic landscape of Europe. These initiatives generally follow a specific course of action of comparing data, processes and strategies, of engaging in discussions and exchanging experiences with the aim of learning together and from one another. But just how does this benchmarking process work? How can a general procedure be adapted to individual goals, issues or structural conditions of the benchmarking-participants? And what challenges can be expected from benchmarking across borders and cultures?

On the 13th and 14th September 2012, the HIS Hochschul-Informations-System GmbH has invited a number of speakers to its first international benchmarking-conference in Hannover, Germany, to illustrate this topic and to share their views and reflect on their experiences.

The aim is to create a platform for international exchange and provide practical guidelines for planning and conducting successful benchmarking projects. Not only will HIS share its own expertise resulting from a more than ten-year experience of benchmarking projects in higher education and research. The conference also refers to the know-how of its speakers who have either conducted international benchmarking projects themselves or have been involved in the process and analysis of such initiatives.

The two introductory presentations discuss the political and social field of action of higher education and research institutions. The first speaker, Dr. Tim Jäkel (Research Institute of Public Administration Speyer), will be reporting on different benchmarking projects in European public administration to show the influence of

HIS Hochschul-Informations-System GmbH
Goseriede 9
30159 Hannover
Postfach 29 20
30029 Hannover
Telefon +49 (0) 511 1220-0
Telefax +49 (0) 511 1220-250
www.his.de

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Further Information:

Dr. Harald Gilch
Tel.: +49 511 1220-443
E-Mail: gilch@his.de

Dr. Thomas Schröder
Tel.: +49 511 1220-121
E-Mail: t.schroeder@his.de

Press Contacts:

Theo Hafner
Tel.: +49 511 1220-290
E-Mail: hafner@his.de

Katharina Seng
Tel.: +49 511 1220-382
E-Mail: seng@his.de

national cultures on the work process of benchmarking and in dealing with higher government authorities and the public. The second presentation by Lene Mejer (European Commission, Brussels) will address the increasing importance of the benchmarking procedure for the European higher education landscape from the viewpoint of the European Commission. In this view the continuous development and improvement of benchmarking is an integral part of a strategic European cooperation in the "Strategic Framework for Education and Training" (ET 2020).

The following set of presentations introduces three practical examples. The speaker Holger Hansel will be sharing the benchmarking experiences of London's Kings College in Britain. Dr. Lottelis Moser from the University of Vienna will follow with an example of a German-Austrian Benchmarking project. Then, Dr. Christiane Gaehtgens will present some international benchmarking projects she directed and counselled herself and show the problems that arose during the process and present their solutions.

On the second conference day the HIS experts will report on three benchmarking projects they directed and advised to show how the general procedure can be adapted and developed according to specific target goals and framework conditions. The first of the three projects is the 'Benchmarking of the administration of German northern universities' based on indicator and process orientated analysis. The second is a strategic benchmarking project with chancellors of several German music academies. The third introduces a strategic benchmarking initiative with directors of universities' international offices. From each of these projects one representative of the partnering universities shares their view on the benchmarking process concerning the goals, their experiences of the implementation procedure and processing the project results.

The event is addressed to the management level of higher education and academic institutions as well as their staff members dealing with aspects of higher education development or strategic processes. The conference offers the opportunity to learn about the benchmarking method and its application, and how this procedure can be practically adopted in the field of higher education and research. Participants who are planning to conduct a benchmarking project will receive constructive advice to ensure a successful project outcome.

Please note: all presentations and discussions will be in English. This opens the event to a larger international audience which in return allows all participants to learn from a greater variety of projects and the experiences of applying benchmarking in other countries.

Online registration is open until 10th august 2012 via the following link:

<https://hisbus.his.de/uc/benchmarking>

The conference fee of 249,90 Euro (incl. tax) covers catering and all conference materials throughout the event. The charge for the conference evening dinner is an additional 50, 00 Euro.

For further information about the International Benchmarking Conference on the 13th and 14th of September 2012 please follow this link or contact:

Dr. Harald Gilch

Tel.: +49 511 1220-443

E-Mail: gilch@his.de

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