What makes a good benchmark?

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“The nice thing about standards is that there are so many to choose from” (Tannenbaum, 1981, p. 221)”

“…a truly practical standard is one that will be used because it is simple enough to follow and flexible enough to allow for creativity … a tool that allows you to do more, rather than a grim necessity to which you must adhere” (Welsch 2002).

Benchmarking

"Benchmarking is the search for and implementation of best practices. The adoption or adaptation of the best practices allows an organization to raise the performance of its products, services and business processes to leadership levels. Benchmarking performance measurements are useful means to identify organizations whose performance is significantly better and who, therefore, may have best practices. **The real benefit of benchmarking, however, comes from understanding the practices that permit the performance and the reasoned transfer to the organization**."
(Camp, 1989, pp. 15–16)

Gresham's Law 1558

"Bad Money drives out good"

- incomplete information
- imposed measures of quality
- naive 'consumer'
- ineffective monitoring
- misalignment drives quality down
- reinforces privilege

Ricketts, M. (2015). Adverse Selection, Gresham's Law and State Regulation. Economic Affairs 35(1):109-122.

Quality Frameworks

TEL Quality Framework	Theory of Change or Quality	References
ASCILITE Technology Enhanced Learning Accreditation Standards (TELAS)	Peer Review	ASCILITE (2020)
Quality Matters (QM)	Peer Review	https://www.qualitymatters.org Varonis (2014)
Online Learning Consortium Quality Scorecard Suite (OLCQSS)	None	OLC (2021)
The Joint Information Systems Council (JISC): eLearning Quality Standards	None	JISC (2004; 2021)
eLearning Guidelines (New Zealand) (eLGNZ)	TQM	http://elg.ac.nz Suddaby and Milne (2008)
EFMD Online Course Certification System (EOCCS)	None.	EFMD (2021)
International Council of Distance Education (ICDE): Open, Online, Flexible and Technology Enhanced Learning (OOFAT)	None	Orr, Weller & Farrow (2018)
E-Learning Maturity Model (eMM)	Maturity Model	http://e-learning.geek.nz/emm/ Marshall (2006)
EADTU E-xcellence Label	Peer Review	https://e-xcellencelabel.eadtu.eu Ehlers (2012) EADTU (2016)
E-learning Quality Model (ELQS) from Sweden	TQM	SNAHE (2008)
ACODE Benchmarks	**Collaborative Benchmarking**	**Sankey et al. (2014)**
Commonwealth of Learning Technology-enabled Learning Implementation Handbook (CoL)	TQM	Kirkwood & Price, 2016

Our benchmarks should:

- reflect the diversity of student learning capabilities and desired outcomes;
- be designed to evolve to meet the challenges of new forms of technology, and new types of pedagogy, and ideally they should stimulate the discussion, application and research that result in that evolution;
- be enablers of effective practice rather than constraints on the creativity and burdens to the passion of teachers;
- be informed by an evidence base of effective teaching practice and research into ways of improving student learning, but not limited by conceptions that are misaligned to TEL;
- be expressed in a way that enables efficient determination of performance and an ability to "benchmark" or document that performance over time in a coherent and reliable way;
- support the management of institutions in identifying areas in need of development and strategic decisions regarding the future direction of TEL;
- support the development of TEL capability across networks of practice, rather than encouraging piecemeal and isolated initiatives.

Marshall, S. (2004). E-learning standards: Open enablers of learning or compliance strait jackets? In R. Atkinson, C. McBeath, D. Jonas-Dwyer & R. Phillips (Eds), Beyond the comfort zone: Proceedings of the 21st ASCILITE Conference (pp. 596-605). Perth, 5-8 December.

Critiquing benchmark statements

1. Is each measure within scope for the domain being assessed, does it have ‘content validity’?
2. Does the measure satisfy completeness?
3. Does each measure have ‘face validity’?
4. Does the indicator measure what it claims to and is it logically appropriate?
5. Is each measure singular in focus, defined independently of other measures and describing only one aspect of an activity?
6. Does each measure describe an important and necessary outcome or characteristic of an activity?
7. Does each measure avoid specifying a particular technology, process or mechanism for undertaking the activity?
8. Measures must discriminate; does it support the application of judgement and decision-making by those using the model?
9. Is the measure able to be reliably used?
10. Is the measure consistent over time and location?
11. Is the measure timely?
12. Does the measure have clarity and transparency with respect to known limitations?
13. Is the measure accessible and affordable?
14. Is aggregated data respecting the underlying abstractions and meanings?
15. Is there evidence supporting the importance of the measure and validating its inclusion?
16. Does the measure enable improvement to occur?

Marshall, S.J. 2018. Using evidence to guide sense-making. In Shaping the university of the future: Using technology to catalyse change in university learning and teaching, ed. S. Marshall, 349–386. Singapore: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-7620-6_16.

Is each measure within scope for the domain being assessed, does it have ‘content validity?

- Does the institution publicly share its progress on meeting accessibility goals, such as WCAG compliance, physical access updates, or inclusion metrics?

Is each measure singular in focus, defined independently of other measures and describing only one aspect of an activity?

- Before: To what extent does the institution have a structured governance model overseeing accessibility and inclusion?

Is each measure singular in focus, defined independently of other measures and describing only one aspect of an activity?

- Before: To what extent does the institution have a structured governance model overseeing accessibility and inclusion?
- After: Does the institution have governance oversight of TEL accessibility?
- Or: The institution has governance oversight of TEL accessibility

Is each measure singular in focus, defined independently of other measures and describing only one aspect of an activity?

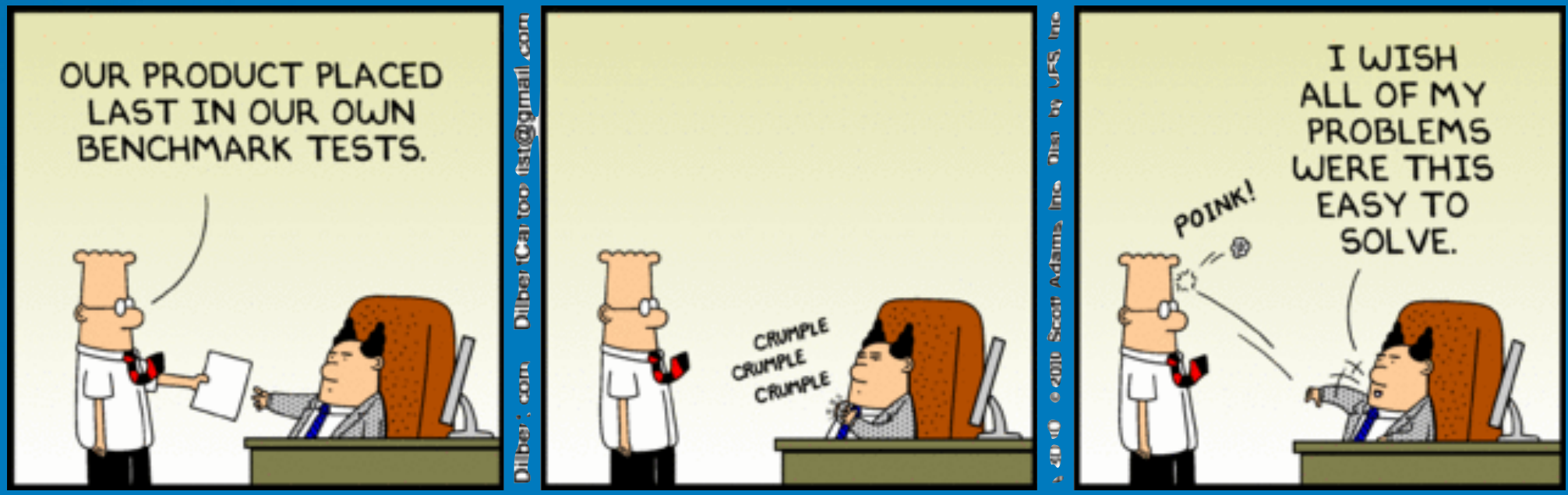
- Are there specific policies addressing support, accommodations, and inclusion for students and staff with disabilities?
  1: No formal policies for accessibility.
  2: Basic policies exist but lack depth and specificity.
  3: Policies are available but inconsistently applied or outdated.
  4: Robust policies for both students and staff are in place and periodically reviewed.
  5: Comprehensive policies with regular updates, covering all aspects of accessibility, including digital, physical, and pedagogical.

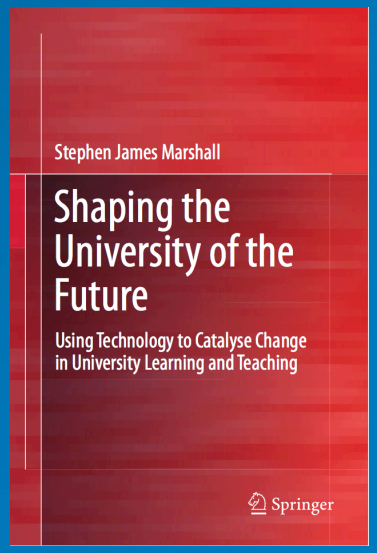
Does the measure enable improvement to occur?

- Before: How aligned are institutional accessibility policies and guidelines with national accessibility standards and global frameworks (UNESCO)?

Does the measure enable improvement to occur?

- Before: How aligned are institutional accessibility policies and guidelines with national accessibility standards and global frameworks (UNESCO)?
- After: Institution policies, procedures and guidelines provide a framework for how TEL accessibility is achieved


OUR PRODUCT PLACED LAST IN OUR OWN BENCHMARK TESTS.
CRUMPLE CRUMPLE CRUMPLE
POINK!
I WISH ALL OF MY PROBLEMS WERE THIS EASY TO SOLVE.



Marshall, S. (2018). *Shaping the University of the Future: Using Technology to Catalyse Change in University Learning and Teaching*. Sydney, Australia: Springer.
http://www.springer.com/gp/book/9789811076190

Sankey, M.D., Huijser, H. & Fitzgerald, R. (2023). *Technology-Enhanced Learning and the Virtual University*. Singapore: Springer.
https://link.springer.com/referencework/10.1007/978-981-19-9438-8

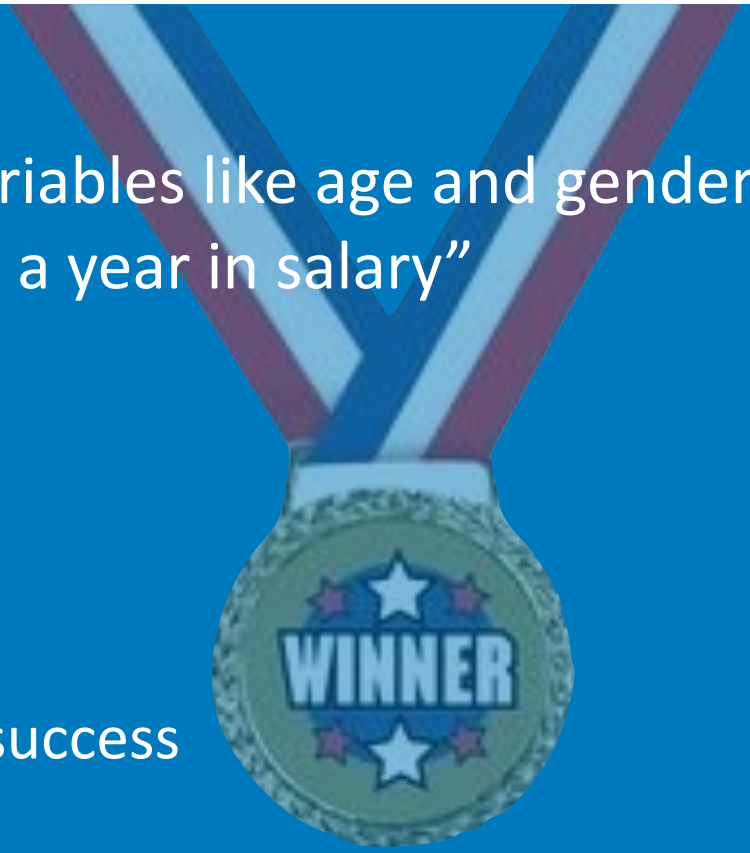
"We shall never be able to escape from the ultimate dilemma that all our knowledge is about the past, and all our decisions are about the future" (Wilson, 2000, 24)

Wilson, I. (2000). From Scenario Thinking to Strategic Action. Technological Forecasting and Social Change 65:23-29.

Tall People

"when corrected for variables like age and gender and weight, an inch of height is worth $789 a year in salary"

Gladwell (2007)



- Tall people:
  - Earn More
  - Are happier
  - Have greater career success
  - Are more intelligent

http://www.livescience.com/5552-taller-people-earn-money.html