

Benchmarking VET/VPET institutions' engagement with their local region and communities

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12 November 2016

To cover

- ▶ Monitoring and evaluation in establishing Learning Cities
- ▶ The scope and aims of the research
- ▶ Methodology of benchmarking
- ▶ Results

Monitoring and evaluation in establishing Learning Cities

- ▶ Define the measures for performance and progress in the city based on the action plan
- ▶ Establish mechanisms for documenting the process and collecting data
- ▶ Develop tools and instruments for building learning cities
- ▶ Commission regular reports on the progress and suggestions for improvements

Background of the research

This research is aimed at evaluating and fine-tuning a benchmarking instrument that can help to evaluate the ways Vocational and Professional Education and Training (VPET) institutions engage with their local region and communities.

It is a collaborative project between The EdUHK, Glasgow University and several HK partners.

The main research question:

Is a benchmarking approach can be an effective measure of VPET institutions' impact in the region?

What is regional engagement?

- ▶ Diverse ways of interaction among institutions (staff and students), public agencies, business community, not-for-profit organisations and community groups to facilitate knowledge exchange, sharing of skills and experience
- ▶ Relationship between providers and the communities within their locality

Regional engagement is well recognized to generate an array of benefits:

- ▶ Improve students learning
- ▶ Benefit the social, economic and cultural development of the region
- ▶ The quality of life and opportunities in the region
- ▶ Improve well-being of the region
- ▶ Making broader international connections

Forms of regional engagement

- ▶ Formal such as partnerships
- ▶ In-formal: depends on the particular interests of individual staff and students
- ▶ Direct contribution to service provision, economic development and health and well-being in the region
- ▶ Engagement in areas with respect to the social, economic and cultural life in a region

Appraising engagement- Benchmarking

- ▶ VPET are usually complex organisations, i.e. engagement activities are diverse in nature and spread over many different fields
- ▶ This diversity creates problems for the rigour with which practice can be captured and assessed
- ▶ Benchmarking is a mechanism for measuring organisational performance and respective impact on local communities and quality of engagement

Aims

- ▶ Help education providers answer the question of how good is their regional and community engagement, and identify where improvements could be made
- ▶ Refine the benchmarking instrument based on the feedback received from participating institutions

The methodology

Engagement activities group into a series of domains:

1. Institutional processes for promoting, managing and supporting engagement
2. Developing human capital
3. Developing regional learning processes and social capital
4. Developing business processes and innovation
5. Community development processes
6. Cultural development
7. Promoting good practice in sustainable development
8. Contributing to regional infrastructure and development processes

Each domain has a number of benchmarks, for example,

Domain 4

4 Community development processes - ensuring that the benefits of enhanced business competitiveness are widely shared within the community, and that the health and welfare of the population are maximised.

Closely associated with concerns about meeting community needs and acting as a resource for the community.

- ▶ Benchmark 4.1 Contributing to healthy cities and health promotion
- ▶ Benchmark 4.2 Support for community-based regeneration
- ▶ Benchmark 4.3 Student community action
- ▶ Benchmark 4.4 Opening up college facilities to the community
- ▶ Benchmark 4.5 Organising and hosting events and festivals for the community
- ▶ Benchmark 4.6 Coproduction of community-relevant research with community partners
- ▶ Benchmark 4.7 Supporting community and social development through the curriculum
- ▶ Benchmark 4.8 Leading debates around the college/ society compact

Appraisal sheet

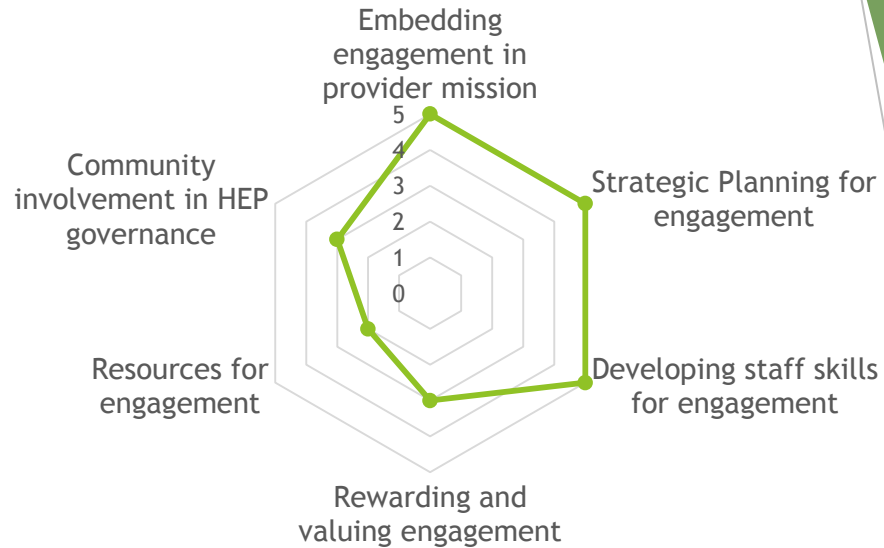
- ▶ Each benchmark is assessed through the Appraisal sheets
- ▶ Benchmarks focused on the assessment of practice of regional and community engagement by institutions
- ▶ The institute collect required information on the appraisal sheet and rate the engagement activity
- ▶ Institutions are interviewed
- ▶ Ratings of institution

performance on each of these aspects provides an indication of engagement

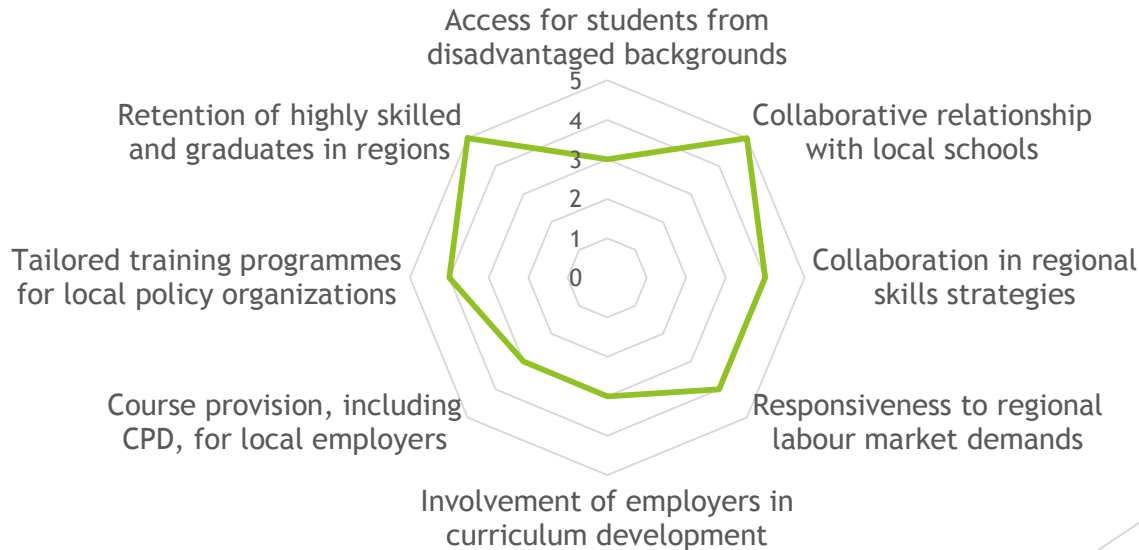
Rating Scale	Activity	Relevant metrics	Remarks
	Indicates practice associated with each end point and the mid-point on the scale	Record relevant metrics to indicate level or volume of activity	Record any supporting comments to justify rating
1	Poor practice		
2			
3			
4			
5	Good practice		
	Best practice includes Indicates elements of best practice in this aspect of engagement	Metrics may include: Suggested data sources and metrics if available	

Data of the Institution 1

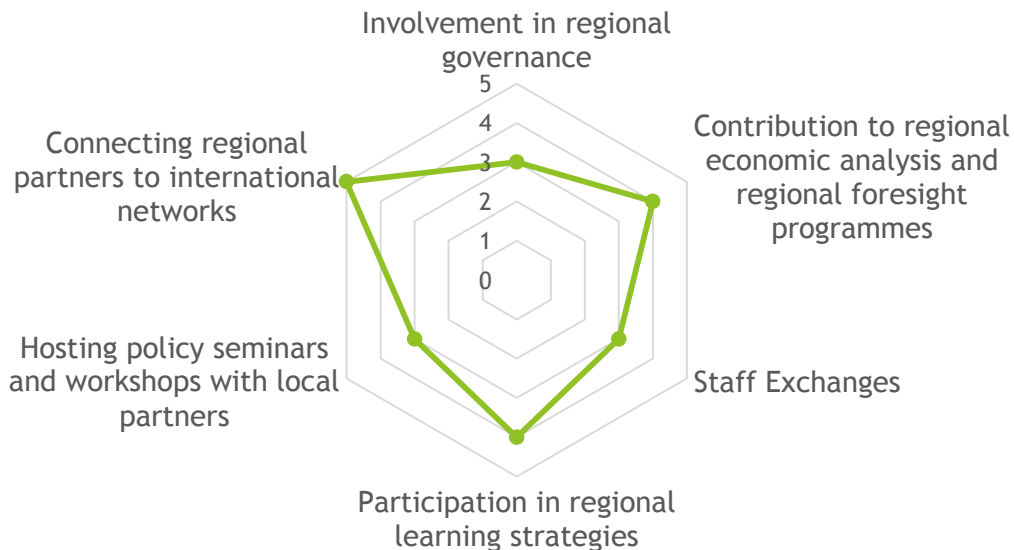
Domain 1 - Promoting Engagement within the institution



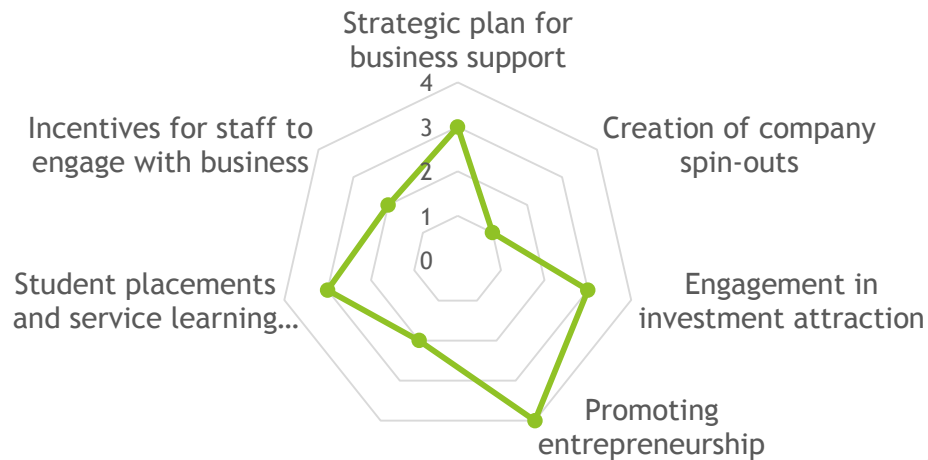
Domain: 2 - Human capital development



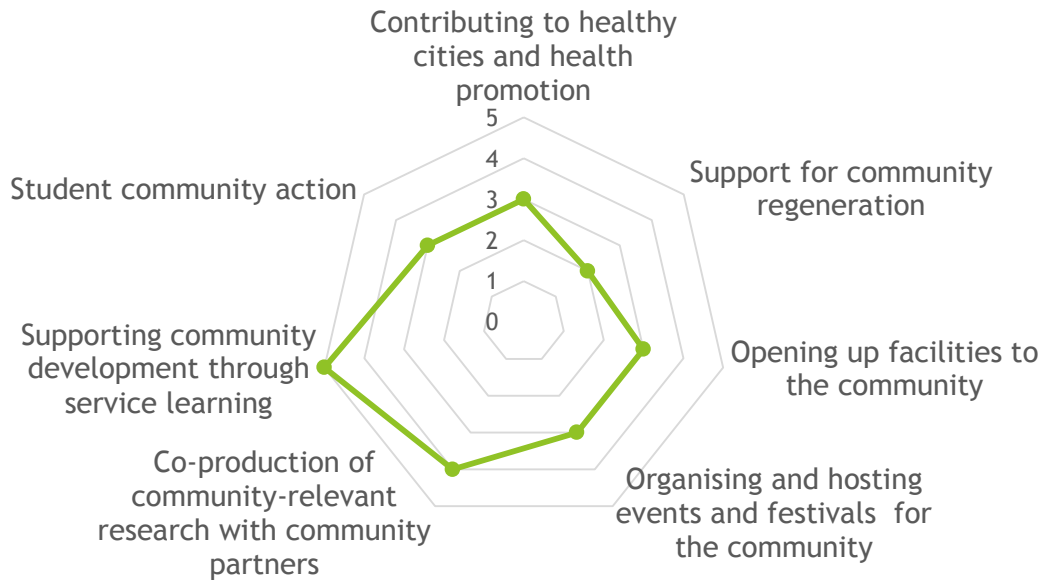
Domain 3 - Developing regional learning and social capital



Domain 4 - Business development processes



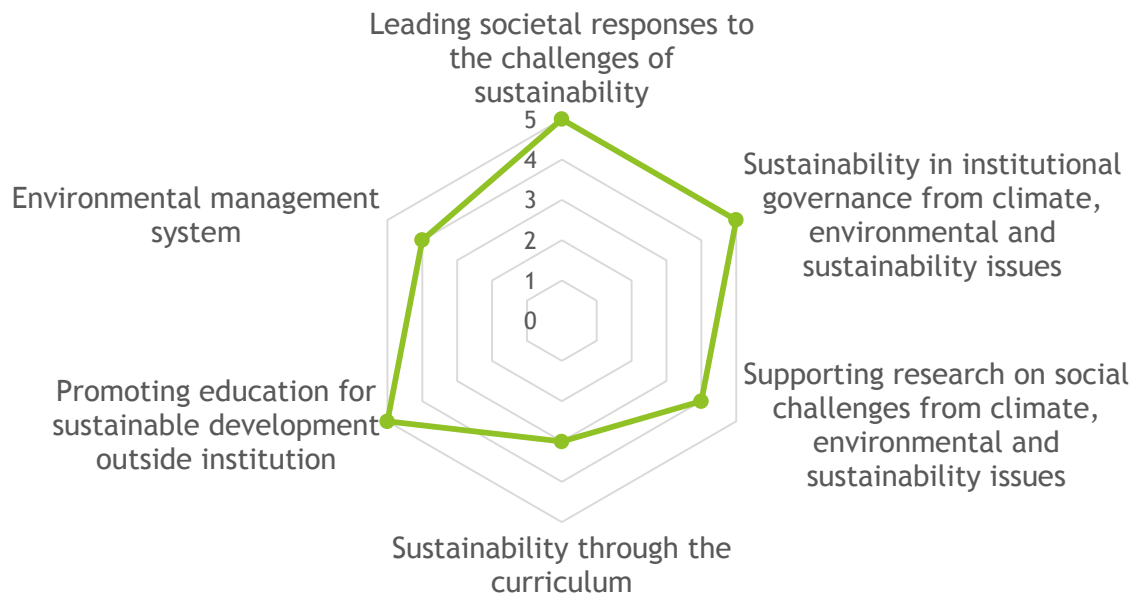
Domain 5 - Community development processes



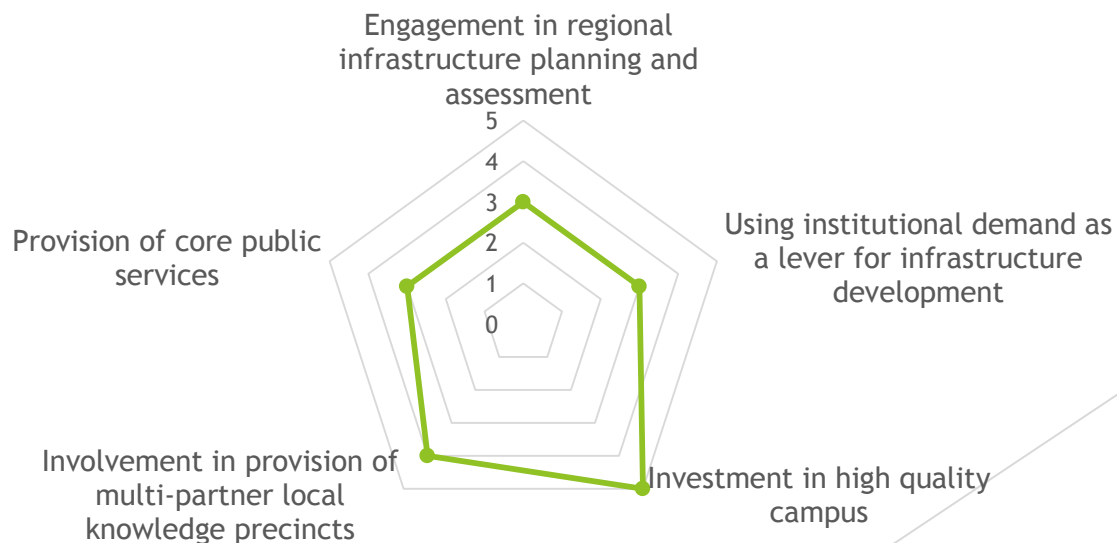
Domain 6 - Cultural development



Domain 7 - Promoting sustainability



Domain 8 - Regional infrastructure planning and development



A summary sheet

Agreed score	Comments
Record agreed rating for aspect	For any other comments, eg from regional stakeholders

Domain	Aspect	Rating
1 Institutional support	1.1	5
	1.2	5
	1.3	5
	1.4	3
	1.5	2
	1.6	3
	Domain 1 - Overall	

Overall score of benchmarking: Institution 1



Significance of benchmarking

- Identify strengths and weaknesses in provider's practice
- Help to assess the extent to which provider's mission and policies are being delivered
- Provide qualitative enhancement to more conventional economic analysis and metrics of engagement
- Assist with identifying the aspects of performance within institutions to determine priority
- Serve as a pilot that can be then promoted to the HK government as one of the instruments to assess quality of VPET and to monitor an impact of educational institutions to Learning city progress