



TEQSA update

UPDATE 1, 2016

TEQSA publishes updates to give the Australian higher education sector information on the Agency's work, regulatory policies and the transition to the new Threshold Standards.



A word from the Chief Executive Officer

I'm now eight months into the job as TEQSA's CEO and am greatly encouraged by my positive meetings with sector peak bodies and providers alike. It is important to me to meet with our stakeholders face to face and I have met many more providers and TEQSA experts at the recent Standards transition information sessions held around Australia.

The 2016-17 federal budget included an additional \$10.1 million over four years. This commitment to maintaining and boosting the quality and reputation of Australia's education system will allow TEQSA to increase our capacity to investigate and respond to emerging risks as the number and types of providers, and models of delivery increase. The funding will also allow TEQSA to respond to the increase in provider registrations and course accreditation applications. I also support the increased investment in the QILT website, as a means of providing

relevant information to prospective students, improving transparency and to complement the increased emphasis on public information in the new Standards Framework.

Earlier this year, I attended the Council for Higher Education Accreditation's conference in Washington DC and met with members of the US Department of Education and the Policy Advisor to the Chair of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Senate Committee.

One thing that stands out during these meetings and in collaborations like the QACHE project (story on page 2) is the very high level of interest in TEQSA's quality assurance model – there is no doubt that our progress in supporting Australia's higher education system is being closely observed by the rest of the world.

- Anthony McClaran

2016 information sessions – transition to the new Standards Framework

As mentioned above, TEQSA has hosted a series of roundtables in most capital cities to provide information to registered providers and TEQSA experts on the transition to the new Higher Education Standards Framework.

The sessions are being hosted by TEQSA CEO Anthony McClaran alongside a TEQSA Commissioner and have:

- ▶ outlined and discussed the approach to implementing the new Standards Framework which applies from 1 January 2017, and

- ▶ provided a brief update on TEQSA's implementation of the streamlined assessment approaches introduced during 2015.

A copy of the presentations from the sessions will be made available on the TEQSA website once the sessions have concluded in May.

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For further information about the transition to the new Standards Framework, contact standards@teqsa.gov.au.

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Quality Assurance of Cross Border Higher Education: Collaborative project with the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Since 2013, TEQSA has been participating in the Quality Assurance of Cross Border Higher Education (QACHE) project, coordinated by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

This recently concluded project focused on finding practical ways in which agencies can cooperate and share responsibility in facilitating the quality assurance of Cross Border Higher Education (CBHE), in particular in avoiding duplication of efforts and lessening the burden on cross-border providers.

One of the many positive outcomes of the project was a toolkit for quality assurance agencies such as TEQSA, designed to provide practical guidance on the quality assurance of CBHE.

A copy of the toolkit can be found on TEQSA's website at www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/QACHE_Toolkit_web.pdf.

The QACHE project complements TEQSA's current work in further developing its policy and approaches to international quality assurance. Last year TEQSA conducted its first provider visits to offshore operations and this initial pilot has provided a range of considerations for TEQSA to further develop its approaches to the quality assurance of CBHE over 2016.

TEQSA's partners in the project consortium were the Asia-Pacific Quality Network and the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education as well as a number of national quality assurance agencies, including the UK's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain; the French High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education; and the German Accreditation Council. The project was co-financed by the Erasmus Mundus Programme of the European Union.

For more information on TEQSA's international work, visit www.teqsa.gov.au/about/international-engagement

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Transition of TEQSA Provider Information Request

The TEQSA Provider Information Request is currently being transitioned to the Department of Education and Training. The PIR transition is a key component in developing a national collection for higher education data, an objective that TEQSA and the department have been jointly working to establish.

TEQSA notified providers about the transition arrangements in November 2015, including reporting timeframes particular to each provider's circumstances and FEE-HELP status. To support providers, TEQSA and the department have worked to ensure that existing requirements and templates are closely aligned. We will also continue to work with providers during the transition period.

This change will see the establishment of a single point for all registered higher education providers to report student, staffing and financial data. However, TEQSA will continue to collect survey data from providers that do not participate in the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching and Graduate Careers Australia programs.

Financial information will be reported solely through the department's HELP IT System, to remove existing duplication in the reporting of financial information. Reporting dates for the submission of financial data will align with legislative requirements.

Student and staff data will be submitted through the department's Higher Education Information Management System, streamlining this data to a single collection. Consistent with the current PIR schedule, reporting will commence from 1 July 2016 with submission due by 31 August.

After the transition, TEQSA will source data directly from the department and will continue to use this information to streamline the reporting requirements associated with regulatory assessment processes such as renewal of registration and course accreditation.

For more on the PIR transition and information collection, visit www.teqsa.gov.au/for-providers/provider-obligations/information-collection

Reporting of registered provider key financial metrics

TEQSA ran a sector-wide consultation between November 2015 and January 2016 seeking input on our proposed reporting model of the key financial metrics we collect from all types of registered higher education providers.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank those organisations who supplied feedback during the consultation period.

This is the first report of its kind on the Australian higher education sector, aiming to enhance and improve the level of publicly available financial information with a view to better informing decision making by sector stakeholders.

TEQSA will continue to release selected data from our collection throughout 2016 and beyond, as requested by providers during last year's provider roundtables.

The final report takes into consideration this feedback on the best way of presenting a sector-wide financial information profile. It can be downloaded from the TEQSA website at www.teqsa.gov.au/news-publications/publications.

⋮ This report aims to enhance and improve the level of publicly available financial information with a view to better informing decision making by sector stakeholders.

TEQSA and ASQA's cross-agency work continues

In 2016 TEQSA and ASQA are working to improve the streamlining of the regulation of multi-sector providers. Recent initiatives include the sharing of risk assessment information and discussions regarding strategies for the use of provider data to inform the scope of assessment for regulatory processes.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the agencies facilitates the development of cross-agency processes to facilitate sharing of comparable evidence and provider information.

With the recent changes to the ESOS Act taking effect on 1 July 2016, TEQSA and ASQA are currently reviewing their MOU to explore further streamlining possibilities for CRICOS registered providers. TEQSA and ASQA as ESOS agencies will have direct powers to regulate and can register providers for up to seven years under the ESOS Act to align ESOS registration and provider registration. ESOS agencies will be able to use evidence in the assessment of both provider registration and ESOS registration regulatory processes resulting in further benefits for multi-sector providers with the minimisation of requests for information.

TEQSA and ASQA are also developing a list of multi-sector providers, which reports the registration status and risk assessment rating from each regulator. This will help to monitor changes in provider operations and give each regulator more detailed information to use in regulatory assessments of both current multi-sector providers and VET or higher education providers applying for initial registration to offer courses in the other sector. Further streamlining of regulatory processes for multi-sector providers includes the joint management by TEQSA and ASQA of regulatory processes, to avoid duplication of evidence requirements.

Core + Model Course (Re) Accreditation reminder

To avoid unnecessary delays, non-self-accrediting providers are reminded to contact their case manager six months prior to the submission of a course accreditation or re-accreditation application. The scope of assessment and evidence requirements for each application must be agreed before the application is finalised. Speak to your case manager or see the online guide (www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/CourseAccredandReaccred_ProcessGuidev2.0.pdf).



Chinese Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE) delegation visits TEQSA

TEQSA recently hosted a delegation from the CSCSE, who were in Melbourne attending the Asia-Pacific Association for International Education Conference. The delegation included the Deputy Director General and two Program Managers, from the International Cooperation and Overseas Academic Credential Evaluation Offices.



TEQSA CEO Anthony McClaran with members of the Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange.

The CSCSE was established in 1989 as an agency under the Ministry of Education. The agency is a key quality assurance body for higher education in the People's Republic of China and facilitates international scholarly exchanges, for students and scholars, studying through foreign providers in China and abroad.

The CSCSE appreciated the opportunity to meet with TEQSA's CEO, Mr Anthony McClaran, Dr Karen Treloar (Head of International Engagement) and other senior members of the agency, who presented on TEQSA's approach to regulating cross border education and the transition to the new Higher Education Threshold Standards. The meeting marked an important step in progressing the dialogue between both agencies. International engagement is a central element of TEQSA's strategy to protect and enhance the reputation of Australian higher education.

TEQSA has a number of agreements with international quality assurance agencies. Visit www.teqsa.gov.au/about/international-engagement/international-quality-assurance-agency-agreements for more information.

Higher education standards transition project update

The updated Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 will come into force on 1 January 2017. The Standards provide the basis for TEQSA's regulation of registered higher education providers. They set out the requirements that a higher education provider must meet (and continue to meet) in order to be registered by TEQSA to operate in or from Australia as a provider of higher education.

To assist providers with the transition from the current standards to the updated standards, TEQSA:

- ▶ has established an external Standards Transition Reference group to provide advice on transition matters and will set up an internal Standards Interpretation Panel to address specific questions from providers
- ▶ is holding Provider Briefing sessions throughout 2016 to discuss implementation of the new Standards with providers
- ▶ will implement tailored support for providers with applications due in late 2016 and early 2017
- ▶ will continue work to adapt the Risk Assessment Framework, sector guidance notes, application guides and forms for registration, re-registration, course accreditation and re-accreditation to align with the new Threshold Standards
- ▶ will provide additional support materials (e.g., Frequently Asked Questions) on its website.

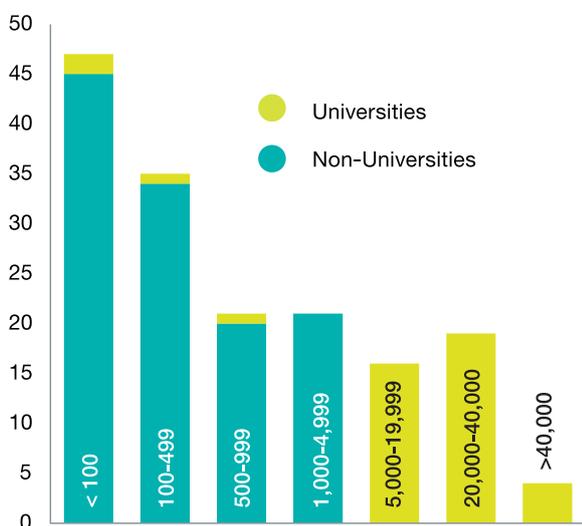
When aligning existing application forms, guides and guidance notes to the new standards, TEQSA is adopting a 'minimal change' mindset. A staged approach will be used to release documents, with the most critical materials published first. 'Beta' versions of these key documents will be made available for use and comment by providers.

- ▶ An overview of the new Framework and TEQSA's commentary on each of the seven domains is now available at www.teqsa.gov.au/teqsa-contextual-overview-hes-framework

Third Statistics Report now available

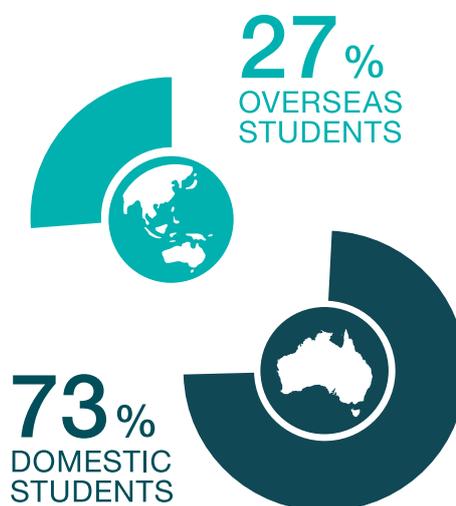
The third Statistics Report on TEQSA Registered Higher Education Providers was published in late April, providing high level information across four key areas: providers, students, academic staff and finances. The report uses the most recently available national data, focusing on 2014. A sample of figures from the report can be seen below. The whole report can be downloaded from the TEQSA website at www.teqsa.gov.au/news-publications/publications

PROVIDERS BY SIZE OF STUDENT LOAD (EFTSL), 2014



STUDENTS 2014:

986,084 EFTSL



STUDENTS ENROLLED AT AUSTRALIAN HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDERS IN 2014 **INCREASED BY 5% FROM 2013.**

INCREASE IN STUDENTS

