



Budget measures strengthen quality assurance of Australia's higher education sector

TEQSA has welcomed measures announced in the Commonwealth Government's Budget 2018-19, designed to enable us to effectively undertake our regulatory functions and sector-wide activities, including admissions transparency evaluation and the protection of academic integrity.

The government has indicated that the additional funding (amounting to \$24.3 million over four years) will partially come from moving our current partial cost recovery arrangements to full cost recovery over a four-year period. This change is in line with [the Australian Government's Charging Framework](#).

CEO Anthony McClaran said that the changes would strengthen TEQSA's oversight of Australian higher education and significantly improve our capacity to undertake monitoring, investigation and compliance activities where quality is a cause for concern.

"Also announced in the Budget was \$3.1 million to allow TEQSA to undertake a national role tackling the increasingly complex issue of contract cheating and academic integrity in higher education", said Mr McClaran.

"We will work with the Minister, the Department of Education and Training and the COAG Education Council to determine whether establishing consistent legislation across Australia to outlaw the provision and advertising of cheating services would assist the sector deal with this issue".

The additional funding will also allow TEQSA to manage our regulatory activities more effectively. This work has been affected in recent times by a marked increase in the number of registration applications

from prospective higher education providers.

Stakeholders will be invited to comment on a draft Cost Recovery Implementation Statement prior to its implementation.

More information

- Find out more about the Budget 2018-19 from the dedicated [Budget website](#).
- View the Department of Education and Training's Portfolio Budget Statement from [the Department's website](#).

TEQSA conference call for papers now open

A graphic for the TEQSA conference. On the left, a silhouette of a woman's head in profile, facing left, with a glowing blue brain and neural network overlay. The background is split into teal and pink diagonal sections. Text on the teal section reads: "Innovation, Excellence, Diversity", "Third Annual TEQSA Conference", "28 - 30 November 2018", "Melbourne", and "teqsa.gov.au". Text on the pink section reads: "TEQSA". At the bottom left, it says "Supported by Higher Ed Services".

Innovation, Excellence, Diversity
Third Annual TEQSA Conference
28 - 30 November 2018
Melbourne
teqsa.gov.au

Supported by
Higher Ed Services

TEQSA

The call for papers for the Third Annual TEQSA Conference is now open!

The TEQSA Act calls for the protection and enhancement of **Innovation, Excellence, Diversity** in Australian higher education. If you have a paper exploring these key themes, or the fourth stream of **Students**, then you are encouraged to submit it for consideration.

Submissions that place an emphasis on innovative approaches, evidence-based outcomes and collaboration are welcome.

Presenting at the 2018 TEQSA Conference offers a valuable opportunity to connect directly with colleagues across the higher education sector. Attendance at last year's conference increased to 800,

with wide participation from universities, higher education providers, research centres and government.

[For more information, including early-bird registration details, visit our website.](#)

Sexual assault and harassment – TEQSA's role in tackling the issue



Above: TEQSA staff hearing from Allison Henry (Hunting Ground Australia) and Renee Carr (Fair Agenda).

With TEQSA monitoring the higher education sector's response to the Australian Human Rights Commission's *Change the Course* report, we have been meeting with a range of stakeholders and planning our future work program.

All higher education providers have now been asked to respond to TEQSA, outlining how they are addressing the issue of student wellbeing and safety in their operations. Information provided in these responses is now being analysed. TEQSA will then report to the Minister for Education and Training.

TEQSA representatives have recently met with a range of stakeholders including our Student Expert Advisory Group, the Department of Education and Training, industry peak bodies, University Colleges Australia and advocacy groups to better understand the issue and the most effective ways of tackling it.

Planned next steps include building on guidance material already produced (TEQSA's wellbeing and safety guidance note), assessing wellbeing and safety standards in all renewal of registration assessment work and building on our complaints management systems.

Hunting Ground Australia and Fair Agenda presentation

TEQSA staff recently had the opportunity to hear from The Hunting Ground Australia's Allison Henry and Fair Agenda's Renee Carr on the issue of sexual assault and harassment at Australian universities (pictured above).

The presentation covered how the issue has evolved since 2015, in an Australian context, and the sector's response to the issue to date.

2018 provider information request



The submission period for the 2018 Provider Information Request (PIR) will commence on 1 July 2018, consistent with previous cycles. Providers will have two months to submit and verify student and staff data before the portal closes on 31 August 2018.

Under the PIR, student and staff data must be reported to the Department of Education and Training through their Information Management System, known as HEIMS. FEE-HELP approved providers that report student and completion data to the Department under the Higher Education Support Act (HESA) are required to report their staff and financial data under the PIR.

We encourage providers to submit and verify data earlier than the closing date of 31 August 2018 where possible. All providers' principal contacts will receive an email advising them that the portal has opened, inviting them to submit all required data sets.

While the HEIMS and HITS teams are the primary points of contact for the submission of the above information, TEQSA's Information Management team is also available to respond to enquiries throughout the submission period.

If you require assistance, please contact the team via email collections@teqsa.gov.au or call 03 8306 2545.

Reporting of financial information

TEQSA reminds all Non-table A and B providers (with a 31 December 2017 financial year end) to submit their financial information by the 30 June 2018 deadline.

Financial information (comprising Audited Financial Statements and Financial Performance data) must be submitted through the Department's HELP IT System, known as 'HITS'.

Providers are encouraged to check that their HITS login details and permissions are up to date. Any providers experiencing issues logging into HITS should contact FEE-HELP@education.gov.au for support.

Submissions of financial information containing significant and frequently occurring errors will be flagged, and providers will be required to amend all errors prior to re-submission. To avoid this, providers should ensure they are aware of the requirements and processes for submitting financial information.

Risk assessment framework updated

TEQSA has recently updated our Risk Assessment Framework. The changes include aligning aspects of the Framework more closely with the Higher Education Standards Framework 2015, ensuring it is of maximum benefit to all providers.



The revised Framework outlines the steps involved in our assessment process, and what providers can expect during our annual cycle of risk assessments. Risk assessments are confidential and are shared with each provider on an annual basis.

We have also changed the way student attrition rates are calculated, taking in to account feedback received from providers operating within a trimester model.

For more information, [view the Risk Assessment Framework page of our website](#).

Applying for a regulatory condition to be revoked or varied

TEQSA may place specific conditions on providers' registration or course accreditation to address risks of, or actual non-compliance, with the legislation we administer.

If a provider has conditions placed on their operations, they must address the areas of concern outlined in the condition (in the specified time frame), and then apply to have the condition revoked or varied through the Provider Portal once they are satisfied it has been met.

Providers seeking to have a regulatory condition revoked or varied should:

- Speak to their case manager to make the relevant form available through the Provider Portal
- Complete the four sections of the application form and submit via the Provider Portal.

The outcome of this application will determine whether the condition can be revoked, varied or remain in place.

More information

- View the [Conditions of registration/accreditation page](#) of our website.
- View the [Application Guide for Variation or Revocation of a Condition](#) from our website.

Course accreditation and re-accreditation policy

TEQSA has published a Course accreditation and re-accreditation policy, which establishes and describes our approach to applications by registered higher education providers.

The policy outlines our approach to assessing applications made by both high and low risk providers, and includes detail on the contextual factors we will take into account during our assessments.

More information

- [View the policy on our website.](#)

New partnership aims to improve learning and teaching



Above: TEQSA CEO Anthony McClaran and Advance HE Head of Global Partnerships Kathryn Harrison-Graves and the 2017 TEQSA Conference.

TEQSA has entered into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Advance HE, whose focus includes championing the continual development of teaching and learning in higher education.

Advance HE was recently formed as a result of the merger of the United Kingdom's Equality Challenge Unit, the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.

Advance HE inherits a range of relationships with Australian higher education providers, most notably through the HEA Fellowship Program.

To date there are more than 1400 Fellows in Australia, with membership demonstrating a commitment to enhancing teaching, learning and student experience.

TEQSA CEO Anthony McClaran, said that the MoU recognises the Fellowship Program's significant presence in Australian higher education, and will allow us to work with Advance HE in supporting quality enhancement of teaching and learning across the sector.

Advance HE chief executive Alison Johns, said that the MOU with TEQSA highlights the value of sharing approaches and ideas which can help deliver effective support to institutions, with the ultimate aim of improving student experience.

This agreement, the sixteenth international MoU entered into by TEQSA, will encourage both parties to share information including examples of best practice across a range of areas such as accreditation, teaching excellence, academic leadership, equality and diversity.

More information

- [Find out more about TEQSA's international engagement activity](#)
- [Find out more about Advance HE](#)

International news

TEQSA renews international partnership agreements

TEQSA recently renewed Memoranda of Cooperation (MoC) with Papua New Guinea's Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (DHERST) and China's Education Association for International Exchange (CEAIE).

TEQSA Chief Commissioner Nick Saunders met with DHERST's Secretary, Professor Father Jan Czuba to renew the MoC between the two organisations. The two took the opportunity to discuss options for collaboration and information sharing including the formation of a staff exchange program, as Australian higher education providers continue to increase their presence in Papua New Guinea.

The MoC with CEAIE was renewed by our CEO Anthony McClaran and Secretary-General Zhao

Lingshan. TEQSA recently hosted Ms Gao Shan, from the Beijing Institute of Technology as part of CEAIE's international educational exchange program, and continues to work collaboratively with the organisation.

Both MoC's were originally signed in 2014 and have allowed us to facilitate cross border higher education arrangements and promote confidence in the quality of Australian higher education in the regions.

Left: DHERST Secretary Professor Father Jan Czuba and Chief Commissioner Nick Saunders renewing the MoC between the two organisations at a recent meeting in Melbourne.



INQAAHE forum, 2018



Above: TEQSA's Manager Policy and Analysis Greg Simmons and the Tertiary Education Commission Mauritius Executive Director Professor Sid Nair at the risk-based assessment workshop.

TEQSA was pleased to take part in the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education's (INQAAHE) 11th Biennial Forum in early May.

The forum took place in Mauritius, under the theme of Quality is in the Eye of the Beholder: Relevance, Credibility and International Visibility and was hosted by the Tertiary Education Commission Mauritius.

With TEQSA holding a position on the INQAAHE Board, a number of representatives took part in this year's forum. Greg Simmons Manager, Policy and Analysis ran a workshop titled Risk-based Assessment Methods/Issues Relating to Benchmarking and Ranking, giving attendees the opportunity to learn more about our risk-based approach to regulation.

The workshop provided an overview of our Risk Assessment Framework, which allows us to build a snapshot of providers from across the sector, helping prioritise our assurance activities. It also covered how we put the three basic principles of regulation, found in the TEQSA Act, into practice.

Vietnamese delegation visits

TEQSA recently welcomed a delegation from The Ministry of Public Security Vietnam, as part a wider visit to Australia.

The delegation met with a number of TEQSA staff, showing particular interest in our Risk Assessment Framework and how we collect and analyse data and evidence during our regulatory assessments.

The visit also provided an opportunity to discuss ways in which we may be able to advise the Ministry in developing their approaches to accrediting training courses in Vietnam.



Above: Representatives from Vietnam's Ministry of Public Security and TEQSA staff.

News from the sector

Student equity in higher education presentation

Associate Professor Andrew Harvey and Mr Matt Brett from La Trobe University recently presented to TEQSA on their work addressing student equity across the higher education sector.

The session, attended by TEQSA staff and Commissioners, discussed how equity 'blindspots' might be addressed and the need to recognise equity and diversity as core features of quality.

The presentation also covered the role that we as the regulator could play in ensuring equity and diversity across the sector, in relation to the Higher Education Standards Framework.



If you're working on a project that you think is relevant to TEQSA and would like to present, email learning@teqsa.gov.au.

Left: Associate Professor Andrew Harvey and Mr Matt Brett presenting on their work around equality in higher education.

AFP warns international students of 'virtual kidnapping' scam

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) has warned of a complex new scam, largely targeting Chinese students.

The scam involves victims being told they are allegedly implicated in crimes in China. The scammers then coerce the victims into a series of actions and make threats that their families in China will be harmed if they don't cooperate.

Simultaneously, the victims' families in China are told by the scammer their family members have been kidnapped and will only be released if a large sum of money is paid. In each case, the scammers communicate with the victims in Mandarin and falsely claim to be Chinese government officials.

More information



- [View the AFP's statement from their website.](#)

International student conference open for registration



Registrations are now open for the 2018 Council of International Students Associations (CISA) conference. Held in Cairns, the conference includes two days of plenary sessions and social events covering everything from student leadership and engagement to entrepreneurship and employability.

A number of registration options are available, ranging from discounted student registrations to industry and higher education provider staff.

Find out more about at [the 2018 CISA conference website.](#)

About CISA

CISA is the national peak student representative organisation for international students studying at the postgraduate, undergraduate, private college, TAFE, ELICOS and foundation level within Australia. [Find out more at CISA's website.](#)

The sector – at a glance



From the [Statistics Report on TEQSA Registered Higher Education Providers 2017](#)



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