



## Best wishes and thanks for 2018



As 2018 draws to a close, I would like to take a moment to thank all those who have been involved in what has been a full, rewarding and sometimes challenging year.

TEQSA's position in the Australian higher education sector was affirmed in 2018, with significant increases to our budget position and staffing levels to enable us to deliver fully on our mission to protect and enhance Australia's reputation for quality higher education, and positive results from the recently released review of the TEQSA Act (more on that later in this e-News).

In 2017-18, TEQSA completed 269 assessments, and while the median processing time for most applications increased, the 2018-19 Budget has enabled us to begin investing in increasing our staffing profile. This boost to staffing levels and strengthened resources will see TEQSA focus on lowering our assessment times over 2019 and providing further guidance and support to tackle sector-wide issues.

This year saw TEQSA make a significant effort to increase the transparency of our operations. We did this by adding to the types of decisions we publish, releasing new reports and continuing our sector

engagement through independent provider roundtables, the quality enhancement forum series and the annual TEQSA conference.

Our commitment to increasing student engagement in the regulation and quality assurance of Australian higher education saw us hold three meetings of our Student Expert Advisory Group in 2018, with an inaugural student engagement workshop recently taking place (more on that later in this e-News) and a continuing and dynamic student presence at the conference.

Again, thank you for your support in 2018 and, from all the staff at TEQSA, best wishes for the Christmas holiday and a very happy New Year.

Anthony McClaran  
Chief Executive Officer.

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## #TEQSA2018 – engagement in action

Almost 800 delegates, including 100 students, attended our 2018 conference, hearing from thought leaders, policy makers and students on a range of issues facing the sector.

The conference provided attendees with a unique opportunity to hear from higher education professionals from across the sector, and meet TEQSA staff. The attendance and active involvement of students at the conference was a tangible demonstration of our commitment to involving students in both our work, and sector-wide discussions about issues impacting them.



Presenters of note included Professor Nick Saunders, Chief Commissioner of TEQSA; Professor David Lloyd, Vice-Chancellor of the University of South Australia; Professor Deborah Terry AO, Vice-Chancellor of Curtin University; and Kathleen Newcombe, Chief Executive Officer, Sarina Russo Group.

Presentations over the three days covered everything from student perspectives on excellence and diversity in higher education, online higher education trends and whether a degree will be worth it in a future workplace.

2019 promises to be a significant year for HE policy. The session *What's in a name and what's in a qualification* featured Professor Peter Coaldrake and Professor Peter Noonan, leading respectively the review of the Provider Category Standards and the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). The discussion covered whether the current provider categories are fit-for-purpose and how the AQF review can address the innovation and technology changes that are impacting learning and teaching methods.

The third and final day of the conference featured over 60 concurrent sessions in line with the conference's themes of innovation, excellence and diversity. The prize for the best paper for the conference was awarded to Dr Tim Rogers, for his submission titled *The ties that bind are quality assured: Complexity and teaching innovation*, which explores the premise that a central brake on innovation in higher education may be the unintended outcome of the interaction between academic autonomy and system integrity.

A big thanks to all who attended and we hope to see you at #TEQSA2019!





[View photos from the conference on the dedicated photo website](#)

[View presentations from the conference on HES' website](#)

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**Inaugural student engagement workshop**



TEQSA recently held our inaugural student engagement workshop in Melbourne, involving members of our Student Expert Advisory Group and students attending the third annual TEQSA conference.

The workshop, facilitated by Derfel Owen Director of Academic Services at University College London, provided attendees and TEQSA staff with an opportunity to discuss student engagement activities from across the sector, and the world.

Attendees were given an overview of TEQSA, our role and how our work protects student interests before breaking off into groups to share their experience with student engagement practices, how quality assurance could improve their course and what support they felt was required to make them better student leaders.

The discussions between TEQSA staff and students from across the sector, will allow us to continue our student engagement activities, while ensuring our work in the area reflects what students need. A report on the day's activities will be published online shortly.

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## Quality assurance of online learning forum

TEQSA recently held another instalment of our Occasional Forum Series, covering the quality assurance of online learning. The forum allowed attendees to examine trends in online learning, the quality assurance landscape that currently exists for face to face learning, and whether this can be applied online.

Attendees heard from TEQSA Commissioner Lin Martin and CEO Anthony McClaran; Professor Gregor Kennedy, University of Melbourne; Dr Grant Klinkum, New Zealand Quality Agency; Professor Michael Sankey, Griffith University; and Dr Margot O'Neill, ICMS.



Presentations explored many of the features of online learning, including the recent increase in demand, the current frameworks and opportunities available for quality assurance and the New Zealand experience with quality assuring micro-credentials.

The forum also included a student session, with representation from across a number of disciplines and both under and postgraduate levels. The students discussed what their higher education provider was doing well, and where they felt improvements could be made.

Slide packs from the day's forum are available from our website and a recording of the day's presentations will be available on our YouTube channel in the New Year.

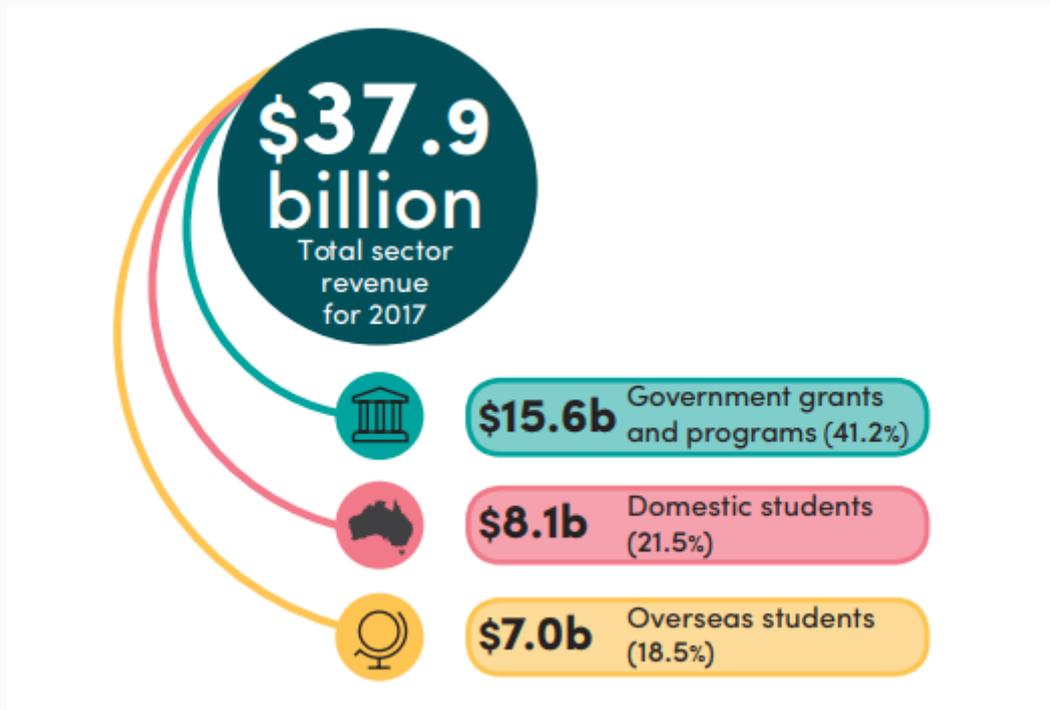
[View slide packs from the day's forum](#)

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## 2018 Key Financial Metrics report released

The latest edition of our *Key financial metrics on Australia's higher education sector* report is now available, offering a snapshot of the sector's financial performance across provider groupings.

### Sector revenue



Our analysis has shown that Government grants continue to be the sector's biggest revenue source, at 41 per cent of total sector revenue, while staff expenditure continues to be the largest expense for higher education providers, with the sector spending \$20.6 billion in 2017.

This year's report also includes a special focus topic, which analyses the financial performance of providers operating in both the higher education and vocational education sectors. The analysis showed that dual sector providers are less profitable than those operating solely in the higher education sector, reporting lower median net surplus/profit margins.

[View the Key financial metrics on Australia's higher education sector](#)

## New legislative instrument increases higher education sector protections

The *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Fit and Proper Person Determination 2018* commenced on 13 December, outlining matters TEQSA may take into account when determining whether a person is 'fit and proper' under requirements of the TEQSA Act.

Amendments to the TEQSA Act in 2017 introduced a requirement that all registered higher education providers, and key personnel for those providers, must be fit and proper persons. This amendment was made to ensure people who had previously been associated with unscrupulous activities in other sectors did not become involved in Australian higher education.

This legislative instrument provides TEQSA and the higher education sector with an important protection, that those charged with high-level decision making are fit to take on such a responsibility.

Guidance on the use and application of the instrument will be issued in the coming months to provide further clarity on TEQSA's approach to determining whether a person is fit and proper.

[View the TEQSA Fit and Proper Person Determination](#)

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## Cost recovery changes delayed

The Australian Government has confirmed that there will be a delay to the implementation of TEQSA's revised cost recovery arrangements, initially announced in the 2018-19 Budget.

The proposed change from partial to full cost recovery arrangements, which will align TEQSA's cost recovery activity and charging model with wider Government policy, will now be phased in from 1 January 2020, instead of 1 January 2019 as initially proposed.

TEQSA will now transition to full cost recovery by 1 January 2022 instead of 1 July 2021.

The decision to delay the introduction of new charges and the transition to full cost recovery arrangements was announced in the Government's Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO), and will provide additional time for a full consultation process with the higher education sector to take place, prior to implementation.

Further detail on our consultation with the higher education sector will be released in 2019, with a draft Cost Recovery Implementation Statement and an outline of planned increases to application-based fees, to be published for stakeholder feedback.

[View the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook](#)

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## TEQSA Guidance – updates and changes

The following TEQSA guidance material has been updated:

- [Guidance Note: Scholarship](#)

Amendment to:

- the end of the 'What does scholarship encompass?' section, in relation to the Boyer Model of Scholarship
- addition of 'a foundation of' in reference to teaching and learning being built on a foundation of advanced knowledge and inquiry.



# SCHOLARSHIP

Activities concerned with gaining new or improved understanding, appreciation and insights into a field of knowledge

[Find out more at \[teqsa.gov.au/guidance-notes\]\(https://teqsa.gov.au/guidance-notes\)](https://teqsa.gov.au/guidance-notes)

## International news

### International staff exchange visitors – Hong Kong and Singapore



*Above L to R: Dr Clara Chong, HKCAAVQ; Felicity Gianatti, TEQSA; Anthony McClaran, TEQSA; Ms Lily Yaw, SkillsFuture Singapore; and Mr Rosaiman Risidi, Committee for Private Education Singapore.*

TEQSA was pleased to host international visitors as part of our International Quality Assurance Agency Staff Exchange Program.

Dr Clara Chong from the Hong Kong Council for the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) and Ms Lily Yaw and Mr Rosaiman Risidi from the Committee for Private Education and SkillsFuture Singapore extended their visit to Melbourne following the TEQSA Conference to build on their understanding of quality assurance in Australian higher education.

The week-long visit included participation in training and development sessions focused on elements of our case manager role, undertaking visits to two higher education provider campuses, presenting to TEQSA staff on higher education in Singapore and Hong Kong, and discussions about collaborative projects in the future.

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## **International delegation visits – December**



*Above L to R: Delegates from the Office of the Higher Education Commission, Thailand and representatives from tertiary institutions across China*

In December we welcomed delegates from the Office of the Higher Education Commission, Thailand and representatives from tertiary institutions across China. These visits provided an opportunity to discuss TEQSA's approach to quality assurance, our Risk Assessment Framework, the role of external experts in accreditation processes and our international engagement activities.

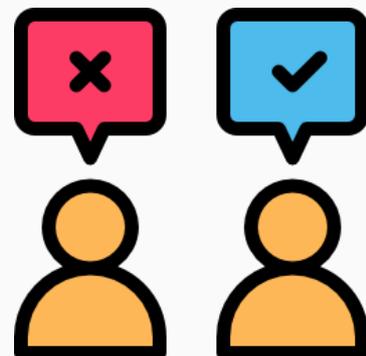
It has been a busy year, meeting with delegations from Vietnam, Japan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Taiwan, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Singapore and Hong Kong, and we are looking forward to continuing our engagement with international partners in the New Year.

## News from the sector

### Review of the TEQSA Act – update

We recently welcomed the release of the Government's response to the review of the TEQSA Act and its impact on the Australian higher education sector.

The review found the higher education sector to be positive about the establishment of TEQSA, which has delivered benefits including reducing compliance burden and improving consistency and confidence of stakeholders in Australian higher education. It



also found that our role is understood and appreciated by the sector and that TEQSA is operating effectively and as intended.

The Government accepted the review and has responded to each of its recommendations, which are largely technical in nature. A bill was introduced to the House of Representatives in early December, which will improve the higher education regulatory system by, in part, making the following changes to the TEQSA Act:

- Requiring TEQSA to inform the Minister and Higher Education Standards Panel (HESP) before undertaking quality assessment work involving the majority of higher education providers
- Allowing TEQSA to disclose certain information about a regulated entity to a person who has lodged a complaint (where TEQSA is satisfied it relates to the subject of the complaint)
- Expanding the skillset encompassed by the HESP to include members with experience outside of the university sector
- Removing references from the TEQSA Act to specific categories of non-threshold standards.

The review, and subsequent amendments to the TEQSA Act, are an important way of ensuring that the legislation governing Australian higher education is fit for purpose and in meeting with sector needs.

## More information

- [View the review of the impact of the TEQSA Act – Final report](#)
- [View the Review of the impact of the TEQSA Act – Government response](#)
- [Track the TEQSA Amendment Bill 2018](#)

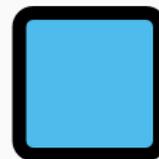
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## Consultation begins on Provider Category Standards and Australian Qualifications Framework review

The Department of Education and Training has released discussion papers for both the Review of the Higher Education Provider Category Standards and Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).



The discussion papers set out a number of considerations and contextual issues that will help guide stakeholder submissions to the reviews.



Interested parties are encouraged to make submissions by the closing dates of:

- 5.00pm (AEST), 8 March 2019 (Provider Category Standards)
- 15 March 2019 (AQF Review).

[View the Review of the Provider Category Standards Discussion Paper](#)

[View the Review of the AQF Discussion Paper](#)

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## Public submissions open for VET review



Public submissions for the review into vocational education and training have opened, with the Hon Steven Joyce calling for perspectives from employers, VET providers, students and their families to help guide the review of the sector.

The review will deliver a report to Government in March of 2019, focused on practical steps that could be taken to improve the sector, alongside a longer term road map for the future.

Interested parties are encouraged to make a submission to the review by 25 January 2019.

[Find out more about the review, including how to make a submission](#)

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## The sector – at a glance



**\$3.7 billion**

The amount spent by higher education providers in 2017 on capital expenditure

(Up from \$3.5 billion in 2016)

Information taken from TEQSA's *Key financial metrics on Australia's higher education sector*, 2018

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We'll be closed from 12:00pm, Monday 24 December 2018 until  
9:00am, Wednesday 2 January 2019



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To contact us, please email [comms@teqsa.gov.au](mailto:comms@teqsa.gov.au)

The logo for TEQSA, featuring the letters 'TEQSA' in white, bold, sans-serif font on a teal background that tapers to the right, meeting a red background.

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You are receiving this email because you are someone who is interested in Australia's higher education sector. The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) is Australia's regulator of higher education, committed to a high standard of education for students.

**Our mailing address is:**

TEQSA  
Level 14, 530 Collins Street  
Melbourne, Vic 3000  
Australia

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