



Innovation, excellence and diversity: how can regulation help?



#teqsa2018

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Overview

- HE – key to Australian economy / society
- Why regulate?
- The regulatory landscape
- How does TEQSA help?
- How is TEQSA responding
- Regulating for the future

HE key to Australian economy / society

Benefits go 'beyond the campus'

- **\$37.9 billion** in revenue
 - Equivalent of **2%** of Australian GDP
- Provided life-changing education and opportunities to more than **1.5 million students**

Australia set to become **2nd most popular** destination for international students in the world



Why regulate?

HE providers historically self-regulated

- Argument for autonomy
 - *“Accreditors and institutions are forced to operate in a culture that...discourages flexibility and innovation.”*
Judith Eaton, CHEA
- Argument for regulation
 - *“Effective regulation is essential to provide accountability for public funds, protect the interests of students and safeguard the reputation of...higher education.”*
Universities UK website



The regulatory landscape

Shaped by the Bradley Review (2008)

- Called for:
 - Change to the sector to permit *diversity* of approaches by institutions, while also encouraging *excellence* and *innovation*
 - National system for accreditation of all HE providers
 - Regulatory cycle to assure quality
 - Quality targets
- Government responded to the Bradley Review in 2009, announcing a reform package for higher education, with **TEQSA** funded in the 2010-11 Budget

Objects of the TEQSA Act

- To **regulate** on basis of national consistency, a standards-based framework, and principles of necessity, risk and proportionality
- To **encourage** and **promote** an HE system that meets Australia's social and economic needs
- To **protect** students by requiring quality and access to information
- To **protect and enhance**:
 - Australia's reputation for quality HE
 - Australia's international competitiveness
 - **Excellence, diversity and innovation** in HE in Australia

A bumpy start

Sector concerns about cost of compliance with regulatory framework

Dow / Braithwaite review (2013) found that:

- One body responsible for regulation crucial but...
- Challenges were caused by TEQSA's approach
 - Regulatory principles of necessity, risk and proportionality did not appear to be adhered to: *“one size fits all approach”*.

Review called for a regulatory partnership approach, with a regulator that:

- Controlled sector entry
- Did not stifle *innovation* or limit niche providers in preference for larger institutions and universities
- Focused on role as regulator, with providers responsible for quality assurance:
“best practice and continuous improvement...are better delivered by other means – especially those preferred by the providers themselves...”

So...how does TEQSA help?

Protecting and enhancing innovation, excellence, diversity

Our approach to regulation is innovative – first to use:

- Risk and standards based approach
 - Regulatory emphasis placed on providers' performance against a single set of standards, rather than on the means by which the standards are met.
 - Differentiated approach to providers depending on regulatory profile and history
- Data analysis as fundamental starting point for assessment
 - Data rather than peer review became central

Australian higher education

Are diversity and innovation being encouraged?

Provider levels consistent since TEQSA's inception

Provider category	2012	2018
Higher education provider	127	126
Australian university	40	40
Australian university of specialisation	1	1
Overseas university	2	2
Total	170	169



HE and diversity

The wider regulatory architecture

- Reviews of the:
 - TEQSA Act (published this week)
 - Australian Qualifications Framework
 - Provider Category Standards

- What effects will these have on the sector?
 - How can higher education better meet the needs of society in the future?
 - What priority for diversity and innovation?



Quality assurance - building partnerships

Strong focus on:

- Engagement with sector, stakeholders and students
- Student-centric approach
 - Student Expert Advisory Group
- Sector guidance
 - 26 Guidance Notes
 - 89.1% of stakeholders rated as good or excellent
- Sector support
 - More good practice notes
- Teaching and learning: benchmarking, peer review, Advance HE
- Partnerships
 - Professional accreditation bodies, ASQA, AITSL
 - International regulatory partners
- Helping to address sector-wide issues...



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- Academic integrity
- Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment
- Admissions transparency

TEQSA's developing approach

More transparency – more accountability –
more resources for sector

- Publishing more information about our decisions
 - Unsuccessful initial applications now available online
 - Review stage also public (i.e. when application made to AAT)
- More insight: *Key Financial Metrics, Assessment Insights*
- Public statements regarding prominent regulatory decisions
 - Paramount Higher Education / Australian School of Management
 - Extensions to registration / accreditation periods



Evolving case management

More engagement to better understand provider context / operations

- Greater level of face-to-face engagement
 - Site visits planned for more providers, so we can better grasp different operating models etc.
- Capacity building for sector
 - Greater understanding of Standards / TEQSA processes to improve regulatory outcomes



Regulatory innovation

Innovation through partnership

CPE / Skills Future Singapore

- 'GradBot' launched online 'chat bot' to help students choose courses / next steps



Knowledge and Human Development Authority (Dubai)

- Dedicated Chief of Creativity, Happiness & Innovation



QAA

- Championed student engagement in quality assurance / enhancement



New Zealand Qualifications Authority

- Micro-credentials formally recognised



Regulating for the future: partnership for quality assurance

What next?

- Increase engagement with the sector
 - Address areas of concern raised by independent higher education providers
 - Increased face-to-face communication – understanding provider context
- Focus for thought leadership
 - Online learning, scholarship, micro-credentials
- Strengthen and diversify the expert body
 - Experts that reflect the range and diversity of all the providers
- Meet the demand for guidance
 - More guidance / support / best practice material
- But...keep focused on the core
 - Major investment in assessment staff
 - Drive to reduce assessment times





Australian Government

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

TEQSA



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