

ACDICT Annual
Council Meeting

25 JULY 2011

TEQSA

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OVERVIEW



- Context for regulatory change
- The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA):
 - Challenges for the new regulatory approach
 - Challenges for a standards-based approach
 - Quality improvement
 - Transitioning to the new environment

CONTEXT FOR A NEW APPROACH

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2008 Review of Australian Higher Education

- Move to a more open and competitive system in 2012 – no government limits on university enrolments
- Independent national regulator to accompany opening up of system because of the fragmented nature of current regulatory interventions
- Establishment of independent regulator supported in the sector to protect national reputation and ensure students get a fair deal

PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS FOR THE NEW APPROACH



- Should not entrench the status quo
- Transparent
- Regulation based on prevention
- Standards based approach
- Regulatory process has real consequences but is not burdensome on high quality providers (level of intervention related to assessment of risk)
- Greater power to intervene and enforce compliance
- Combines regulatory and quality improvement activities

DEVELOPING THE REGULATORY APPROACH

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Legislation includes three basic principles for regulation with which TEQSA must comply:

- 1. Principle of regulatory necessity**
- 2. Principle of reflecting risk**
- 3. Principle of proportionate regulation**

DEVELOPING THE REGULATORY APPROACH

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- A risk management framework:
 - Institutions will be continuously assessed against a risk framework which employs both quantitative and qualitative indicators. Regulatory interventions are possible at any time
 - A formal (up to) 7 year cycle of registration and accreditation
 - A range of factors, including the provider's history of scholarship, teaching and research, its students' experiences, its financial status and capacity, and its history of compliance will mediate risk judgements
 - The institution's risk rating will determine the level and frequency of regulatory activity

CHALLENGES FOR THE REGULATORY APPROACH



- Implementing the 80/20 approach
- Finding the right risk factors
- Balancing professional judgement with a compliance regime
- Identifying outcomes which a regulator can use
- Developing an approach for dual sector providers
- Regulation of off-shore provision

DEVELOPING THE STANDARDS-BASED APPROACH

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TEQSA will register and evaluate the performance of higher education providers against a new **Higher Education Standards Framework** comprising:

- Provider Standards
 - Qualifications Standards
 - Teaching and Learning Standards
 - Information Standards
 - Research Standards
- } *Threshold Standards*

DEVELOPING THE STANDARDS-BASED APPROACH

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Responsibility for standards setting:

- Higher Education Standards Panel will consult widely and develop standards statements
- Panel will be set up within TEQSA but report separately to Ministers of Tertiary Education and of Research
- Relevant Minister will establish standards after panel has developed draft
 - Relevant Minister must consult with the Ministerial Council, the other Minister, & the TEQSA Commission.

DEVELOPING THE STANDARDS-BASED APPROACH



- **Provider Standards** (translation of the National Protocols) nearing finalisation after significant sector consultation
- **Qualification Standards** will be based on the AQF
- Both Provider Standards and Qualification Standards will be made into legislative instruments
- **Teaching and Learning Standards** – discussion paper released
- **Information Standards** – still to be developed
- **Research Standards** – still to be developed, likely to link to *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*

CHALLENGES FOR THE STANDARDS-BASED APPROACH



- Standards or standardisation – encouraging diversity
- The implications of aiming for minimum standards
- Finding a sensible, accepted and economic way of setting and monitoring learning standards
- Establishing a consistent but fair approach to evidence and data collection

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

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- All information about performance except the current risk rating will be public information
- TEQSA will be able to act at course, cohort, institution or sector level
- TEQSA will conduct thematic reviews
- TEQSA will have capacity to encourage and share best practice

TRANSITION TO NEW ARRANGEMENTS

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- TEQSA will begin operating in a quality assurance capacity on 30 July 2011
- Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) will transition into TEQSA and AUQA's current Cycle 2 audits will continue into 2012
- State and Territory regulatory responsibilities will transfer in January 2012
- Working with ASQA on streamlining regulation of dual sector providers

INTERNATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

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- Australian approach is new
- Considerable interest already from other countries - particularly Japan, UK, China and New Zealand
- General consensus is Australia is now at forefront of international attempts to apply effective regulatory interventions

FURTHER INFORMATION AND UPDATES

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www.deewr.gov.au/teqsa