Notice of meeting

A meeting of the Academic Standards and Policy Committee will be held at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 11 November 2015 in the Senate Room, Quadrangle. The Senate Room is in the Quadrangle on the Camperdown Campus, above the Ante Room which adjoins the Great Hall.

Members who are unable to attend are asked to notify Dr Jacqueline Rule at jacqueline.rule@sydney.edu.au or call on 9114 1927.

Megan Kemmis
Secretary to Academic Board

4 November 2015

Agenda

1. Apologies

2. Minutes of previous meeting

   Recommendation
   That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee adopt the minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 September 2015 as a true record.

3. Business arising from the minutes (not dealt with elsewhere in the agenda)

4. Report of the Chair

5. Academic Board Items

   5.1 Report from the Chair of the Academic Board

      Recommendation
      That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the report of the Academic Board meeting of 28 October 2015, as set out in the report presented.

   5.2 Academic Board Nominees on Level A Selection Committees

      Recommendation
      That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee approve the ‘Academic Board
nominees on Level A Selection Committees’ paper.

6. Simple Extensions * supplementary agenda

**Recommendation**
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend the Academic Board approve the proposed amendment to clause 6(1) of the Assessment Procedures 2011 with effect from 1 January 2016.

7. Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce Update

**Recommendation**
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the verbal update on the work of the Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce.

8. Learning and Teaching Policy * supplementary agenda

**Recommendation**
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend that the Academic Board approve the draft Learning and Teaching Policy with effect from 1 January 2016.

9. Academic Board/SEG Faculty Reviews

9.1 Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning attachment emailed separately

A confidential report on the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning Review together with the Faculty’s response is enclosed separately; this should not be circulated outside the University and will not be included in public agenda papers or minutes.

**Recommendation**
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee consider the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning review report and commend it to the Academic Board.

9.2 Faculty of Medicine attachment emailed separately

A confidential report on the Faculty of Medicine Review together with the Faculty’s response is enclosed separately; this should not be circulated outside the University and will not be included in public agenda papers or minutes.

**Recommendation**
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee consider the Faculty of Medicine review report and commend it to the Academic Board.

10. Student Misconduct Report 2014 separate attachment

**Recommendation**
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend the Academic Board note the Student Misconduct Report 2014.

11. Amendment to the Student Appeals Rule separate attachment

**Recommendation**
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend the Academic Board approve the amendment to the Student Appeals Rule.

12. Special Consideration Decisions Matrix
   separate attachment
   
   Recommendation
   That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend the Academic Board approve the Special Consideration Decisions Matrix.

   pages 11-38
   
   Recommendation
   That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend the Academic Board note the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015.

   separate attachment
   
   Recommendation
   That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommends the Academic Board note the 2014 Annual Report of the Learning Centre.

15. Student Barometer 2015
   separate attachment
   
   Recommendation
   That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the Student Barometer 2015 as set out in the report presented.

16. Committee membership 2016-2017
   page 39
   
   Recommendation
   That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the report on membership of the Academic Standards and Policy Committee for 2016-2017.

17. General business

18. Next meeting
   The Committee’s next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 3 February 2016 at 2.00pm in the Senate Room.
Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Standards and Policy Committee of 30 September 2015

The Academic Standards and Policy Committee met at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 30 September 2015, in the Senate Room, Quadrangle.

There were present: Associate Professor D Traini (Chair), presiding, Associate Professor J Barrett, Mr K Blakeney, Dr I Gelissen, Associate Professor P Gibbens, Dr R Gibson, Mr T Greenwell, Ms K Henderson, Dr P Knight, Associate Professor P McCallum, Associate Professor J O’Byrne (for Dr C Owens) and Ms P Rozenberg.

In attendance: Ms S Brown, Professor T Carlin, Ms M Koureas.

1. Apologies
Apologies had been received from: Mr A Lavery, Dr S Lewis, Ms E May, Dr C Owens (Associate Professor J O’Byrne attending instead), Professor P Pattison, Dr R Saunders, Associate Professor C Sutton-Brady, Professor G Tolhurst and Dr R Wilson.

2. Minutes of previous meeting
Resolution ASPC_6_44/15
The Academic Standards and Policy Committee agreed to adopt the minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 July 2015 as a true record.

3. Business arising from the minutes (not dealt with elsewhere in the agenda)
There was no business arising.

4. Report of the Chair
The Chair advised that she had nothing on which to report.

5. Report from the Chair of the Academic Board
Resolution ASPC_6_45/15
The Academic Standards and Policy Committee noted the reports of the Academic Board meetings of 19 August and 16 September 2015, as set out in the reports presented.

6. Simple Extensions
Professor Carlin thanked Professor McCallum for developing this proposal, noting that further discussion on this issue had been held following the August Academic Board meeting. He reminded members that the new process for handling applications for special consideration will be centralised and will not be used for these sorts of informal requests, nor is there any intention to alter the agreed system to deal with them. Professor McCallum added that the Associate Dean in each faculty will determine whether or not simple extensions will be available to students and unit of study coordinators will detail the process in the relevant unit of study outlines. Ms Rozenberg expressed concern that running a central special considerations system and an informal system will create serious workload problems for staff. Professor Carlin pointed out that the proposed amendment would allow the Business School to decide that it will not offer simple extensions.

Associate Professor Barrett pointed out that faculties will need to develop local provisions related to this amendment, and expressed concern as to how these agreements would be monitored and the impact on faculty resources. Mr Greenwell expressed concern that having the Associate Dean determine whether or not simple extensions would be available could lead to extensions being available in a faculty in one year under one Associate Dean, but not available the next year under a different Associate Dean.
Professor McCallum advised that the amendment had been developed to address concerns expressed at the last Academic Board meeting by student (and some academic staff) members regarding the removal of references to informal applications from the policy, and in particular the impact on students who suffer from stress and anxiety disorders. Professor Carlin pointed out that the new special consideration application process will permit students to submit requests beyond the standard deadline if they provide additional information explaining the delay in submission. Professor McCallum added that the other issue raised was students needing a quick response on whether they could get an extension of a couple of days. He also pointed out that one of the arguments against having this system is that it will not be equitable as it will not be available to all students.

Members discussed whether emails between students and academics would provide a sufficient documentation trail to monitor simple extensions, what communication strategies would be needed and how to avoid confusing this process with the special considerations process. Professor Carlin suggested it might be easier to include a clause in the relevant policy explaining that a lack of reference to informal arrangements between staff and students to allow the late lodgement of assignments does not preclude staff from entering into such an arrangement, but Ms Henderson was doubtful this would prevent staff from assuming they could not offer such arrangements. Professor McCallum undertook to develop the proposal further based on this discussion and support was expressed for seeking advice from faculties on whether or not they would implement the proposed simple extensions scheme, and if so how, for further discussion at the next meeting.

Resolution ASPC_6_46/15
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the discussion of a proposed amendment to clause 6(1) of the Assessment Procedures 2011.

7. Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce Update
Professor McCallum advised that this agenda item includes the draft policy recommended in the taskforce’s first report, and the second report of the group which makes recommendations relating to HDR students (such as the use of Turnitin for thesis submission, and procedures for misconduct by HDR students), misconduct policy (the report recommends deleting Chapter 8 of the By-Law and replacing it with a Senate Rule) and developing a culture of academic honesty (including a review of the student code of conduct by students). He asked the committee to endorse the second report and its recommendations to the Academic Board, but given the report had only been circulated just prior to the meeting he suggested that the endorsement be in principle and that members be allowed to make submissions between now and the next Academic Board meeting. Mr Blakeney supported this suggestion, adding that the SRC would like to see a plain English version of the report and its recommendations for students. Professor McCallum advised that there are plans to produce a brochure outlining the ethos behind the recommendations and the aims of the reports plus where to go for further information, and agreed that a student-friendly document is needed. Professor Barrett asked whether faculties will be expected to review and respond to the data in these reports and Professor McCallum confirmed this, adding that the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)’s portfolio will collate the data for faculties to review and provide commentary on. He added that the document still needed to be reviewed to transfer procedural matters into a related procedures document, and he
proposed the committee approve the principles in the policy, and particularly the flowchart, on the understanding that a revised policy and procedures will be presented for final approval.

Members made the following comments on the policy:

- Ms Henderson noted that the term "nominated academic" had originally been a place-holder term, and asked if there was another title that would be used; Professor McCallum agreed that a specific title would be useful with Associate Professor Gibbens suggesting Academic Integrity Officer and Ms Henderson suggesting Academic Integrity Director;
- Mr Greenwell queried clause 11(11), and Professor McCallum advised this is an expanded version of the existing clause; it essentially says that students can not ignore academic dishonesty by their fellow students if they become aware of it; Mr Blakeney expressed concern that this would not build a culture of academic honesty;
- Mr Greenwell also queried clause 18(7) and suggested amending it to read "...does not attend an interview without good reason..."; during discussion it was clarified that this clause is intended to deal with students who do not respond at all to correspondence, rather than students who need more time to provide a response; Ms Henderson advised that the notice for the meeting should make it clear that this clause allows the faculty to make a decision in the student's absence if they don't respond;
- Professor Barrett and Ms Rozenberg advised that they have sent comments on the draft policy to Professor McCallum, but Ms Rozenberg particularly queried what happens if a student is required to do a remedial course but does not attend the course, or provides a resubmitted assignment that also contains plagiarism; Professor McCallum advised the faculty should interview or meet with the student at this point;
- Ms Rozenberg also queried the point at which a student's history can be taken into account; Professor McCallum advised he would be happy for academics to access this information as and when they need to, but Ms Henderson cautioned that staff should be aware of natural justice provisions and unintentional bias, and undertook to consider this matter further;
- Mr Greenwell asked how the mitigating circumstances referred to in clause 20(5) will work, and Professor McCallum advised this clause will only apply to cases of dishonest plagiarism, and is intended as a penalty guideline as recommended in the Taskforce's first report; Mr Greenwell asked how this fail result in the unit of study would be displayed on the transcript, with Professor McCallum advising that would be determined by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar); Mr Blakeney strongly urged that the mark of zero apply to the assignment, not the unit of study, with some members agreeing and other members countering that a penalty is needed that flags the seriousness of a student’s action; Mr Greenwell added that a transcript that indicates a student was failed a unit for plagiarism would limit their employment opportunities permanently; Professor McCallum agreed to reconsider the wording of this clause and to consider referring to the worth of the assessment task as a factor in deciding whether to apply the fail mark to the unit of study.

Professor McCallum undertook to provide a revised version of the policy to the committee for consideration by circulation.

7.1 Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy 2016

Resolution_ASPC_6_47/15
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the draft Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy.

7.2 Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce Report

Resolution_ASPC_6_48/15
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend that the Academic Board:
(1) note the second report of the Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce;
(2) endorse in principle all four further Taskforce recommendations with a view to implementation by the start of 2017;
(3) approve for implementation:
(a) the introduction of integrity checks for HDR student work at the first milestone during candidacy, to be part of the development of processes around the Progress Planning and Review Policy, and as part of the centralised submission process
(b) removal of the student discipline procedures from the University of Sydney By-law and development of a new Rule of Senate; and
(c) expansion of the TRIM workflow system to handle all student misconduct matters;

(4) join the Taskforce in recommending immediate action by faculties on the development of local provisions to give effect to the Research Data Management Policy; and
(5) note the next steps in relation to the other recommendations of the Taskforce.

8. Learning and Teaching Policy Framework Working Group Update

Professor McCallum advised that this draft indicates the current work of the working group and is not the final draft policy. Professor Barratt asked whether the policy was planned to come into effect in 2016 or 2017, noting the first Education discussion paper referred to the use of minors in degrees. Professor McCallum noted that minors currently exist in some postgraduate courses. Members were invited to send their comments on this policy through to the committee officer or Professor McCallum.

Resolution_ASPC_6_49/15
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee:
(1) note the preliminary policy draft from the Learning and Teaching Policy Framework Working Group; and
(2) note the update on the Working Group.

9. Strategic Plan 2016-2020: Discussion paper on Culture

The Chair encouraged members to comment on this paper, with Professor McCallum highlighting the section on academic freedom and its reference to the culture of individualism which raises the question of whether academic freedom is truly universal or a part of Western democratic culture.

Resolution_ASPC_6_50/15
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the discussion paper on A Culture Built on Our Values.

10 Academic Board/SEG Faculty Reviews: Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery

Professor McCallum noted that the faculty had raised some questions regarding this report but these have been resolved. The faculty has been commended for rebuiding its undergraduate degree, and the faculty will produce an implementation plan to come back to this committee.

Resolution_ASPC_6_51/15
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee consider the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery review report and commend it to the Academic Board.

11 2014 Annual Report of the Learning Centre

This item was held over to the next meeting.

12 Student Placement Policy

The Chair noted that this policy has been developed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education). Dr Gelissen advised that her faculty has suggested some amendments to Section 9. Ms Henderson advised that the section in question, which refers to agreements with placement providers, will require only simple documentation which could be a template letter. Members endorsed the policy for referral to the Academic Board.

Resolution_ASPC_6_52/15
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend that the Academic Board endorse the draft Student Placement Policy 2015.
Special Consideration Decisions Matrix Working Group

Professor McCallum advised that Mr Tim Smithers from the Student Administration Services Program has proposed forming a working group to develop a decisions matrix for use by the new special considerations process. He asked the committee to endorse the formation of the working group, which should include student representation. Ms Rozenberg and Professor Barrett expressed interest in participating and Professor McCallum added he would ask Associate Professor Tim Wilkinson if he is interested in being a member. Members endorsed the proposal.

Resolution_ASPC_6_53/15
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee endorse the formation of a Special Consideration Decisions Matrix Working Group by the Student Administrative Services Project.

2016 Meeting Dates

Members noted the schedule of meeting dates for 2016.

Resolution_ASPC_6_54/15
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the schedule of meeting dates for 2016.

General business

There were no items of general business.

Next meeting

The Committee’s next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 11 November 2015 at 2.00 pm in the Senate Room.
5.1 Report of the Academic Board meeting held on 28 October 2015
The agenda for the meeting of the Academic Board on 28 October may be accessed on the web:
http://sydney.edu.au/ab/about/agendas.shtml

5.1.1 Matters considered by the Academic Board
The Academic Board:
- noted the second report of the Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce “An Approach to Minimising Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism at the University of Sydney - Part 2: Staff Support, Student Research Misconduct, Penalties an Cultural Change”, endorsed in principle all four further Taskforce recommendations with a view to implementation by the start of 2017;
- endorsed the draft Student Placement Policy 2015; and
- approved the report of the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery Review.

5.1.2 Matters considered by the Academic Board
The Academic Board:
- noted the presentation from the Chair on the Vice-Chancellor’s Taskforce on Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism;
- appointed various academic staff members nominated by their deans to fill casual vacancies for the term 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2017;
- noted the reports on the 2015 Academic Board elections for academic staff and student members;
- noted the schedule of meeting dates for 2016;
- noted the report of the Acting Vice-Chancellor on the Culture Leaders Forum;
- recommended that Senate approve the amendments to the Senate Resolutions relating to the Constitution of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences with immediate effect;
- approved requests from the Faculty of Education and Social Work, the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery and the Faculty of Veterinary Science to amend their semester dates for 2016;
- approved amendments to the terms of reference of the Admissions Committee;
- approved a revised schedule recognising the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) as an entry pathway to the University;
- approved a proposal from the University of Sydney Business School to amend the Faculty Resolutions;
- approved a proposal from the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies to amend the Bachelor of Engineering Honours Combined Degree Resolutions;
- approved a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to amend the English language requirements for the Bachelor of Applied Science (Physiotherapy) and Bachelor of Applied Science (Occupational Therapy);
- approved a proposal from the Faculty of Law to amend units of study in the Bachelor of Laws;
- approved a proposal from the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery to amend the Bachelor of Nursing (Honours);
- approved a proposal from the Sydney College of the Arts to amend the Bachelor of Visual Arts (Honours);
- approved the introduction of the Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy and Procedures 2015;
- approved the amendment of the Thesis and Examination of Higher Degree by Research Policy and Procedures 2015;
- approved proposals from the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning to delete the streams in Architectural and Urban Design and Urban Design and Planning from the Master of Urban Design and amend the Master of Philosophy and the elective units of study for the Master of Heritage Conservation and Graduate Diploma in Heritage Conservation;
- approved a proposal from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to amend the Master of Creative Writing;
- approved a proposal from the Faculty of Dentistry to amend the Doctor of Clinical Dentistry;
• approved a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to amend the English language requirements for the Master of Physiotherapy and Master of Occupational Therapy;
• approved a proposal from the Faculty of Law to amend units of study in various postgraduate degrees;
• approved a proposal from the Faculty of Medicine to amend the Master of Medicine, Master of Medicine (Advanced), Master of Science in Medicine, Master of Science in Medicine (Advanced), Graduate Diploma in Medicine, Graduate Diploma in Science in Medicine, Graduate Certificate in Medicine and Graduate Certificate in Science in Medicine; and
• approved a proposal from the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery to amend the Master of Advanced Nursing Practice, Master of Cancer and Haematology Nursing, Master of Emergency Nursing, Master of Intensive Care Nursing, Master of Mental Health Nursing, Master of Primary Health Care Nursing, Graduate Diploma in Advanced Nursing Practice, Graduate Diploma in Cancer and Haematology Nursing, Graduate Diploma in Emergency Nursing, Graduate Diploma in Intensive Care Nursing, Graduate Diploma in Mental Health Nursing and Graduate Diploma in Primary Health Care Nursing; and
• approved a proposal from the Sydney College of the Arts to amend the Master of Fine Arts.
I, SIMON BIRMINGHAM, Minister for Education and Training, make the following standards under subsection 58(1) of the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011*:

1. the Provider Registration Standards  
2. the Provider Category Standards  
3. the Provider Course Accreditation Standards, and  
4. the Qualification Standards.

Dated: 7 October 2015

___________________________________________  
SIMON BIRMINGHAM  
Minister for Education and Training
1. Name of Instrument

This Legislative Instrument is the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015* and revokes the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011* (F2013C00169) and all subsequent amendments.

2. Authority

This legislative instrument is made under subsection 58(1) of the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* (TEQSA Act 2011).

3. Threshold Standards

For the purposes of defining the Threshold Standards under paragraphs 58(1) (a) to (d) inclusive of the TEQSA Act 2011, the applicable standards in the *Higher Education Standards Framework* are specified in the relevant column of Table 1 below:

(a) the Provider Registration Standards: column 2
(b) the Provider Category Standards: column 3
(c) the Provider Course Accreditation Standards: column 4
(d) the Qualification Standards: column 5

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<th>Column 2 Provider Registration</th>
<th>Column 3 Provider Category</th>
<th>Column 4 Course Accreditation</th>
<th>Column 5 Qualification</th>
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<td>Part A: Standards for Higher Education</td>
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<td>1. Student Participation and Attainment</td>
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<td>1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment</td>
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<td>5.2 Academic and Research Integrity</td>
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<td>7.2 Information for Prospective and Current Students</td>
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<td>Part B: Criteria for Higher Education Providers</td>
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4. Commencement

This legislative instrument commences on 1 January 2017 (commencement date).
5. Application and savings provision for applications made before this instrument commences

1. This item applies in relation to an entity if, before the commencement date:

   (a) the entity makes an application to TEQSA under Part 3 (registration) or Part 4 (accreditation) of the TEQSA Act, and

   (b) TEQSA has not made a decision in respect of the application.

2. TEQSA must make a decision in respect of an application to which sub-item 5(1) refers in accordance with the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011* as in force immediately before the commencement date.
HIGHER EDUCATION STANDARDS FRAMEWORK
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The **Higher Education Standards Framework**

The *Higher Education Standards Framework* (the Framework) is established by section 58 of the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* (TEQSA Act 2011).

The Framework comprises:

**Part A: Standards for Higher Education**

These Standards represent the minimum acceptable requirements for the provision of higher education in or from Australia by higher education providers registered under the TEQSA Act 2011.

**Part B: Criteria for Higher Education Providers**

These criteria enable categorisation of different types of higher education providers according to certain characteristics; and whether a provider is responsible for self-accreditation of a course(s) of study it delivers.

**Definitions**

Unless the contrary intention appears, the terms and phrases used in the Framework have the same meaning as in the TEQSA Act 2011.

**Higher Education Qualification**

Higher Education Qualification has the same meaning as *Higher education award* in section 5 of the TEQSA Act 2011 and includes the qualifications listed in Table 2 below, other than an award at an equivalent level in the *Australian Qualifications Framework* (AQF) that is offered or conferred for completion of a vocational education and training course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AQF level</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Higher Doctoral Degree *†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Doctoral Degree *†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Masters Degree (Research) *†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Masters Degree (Coursework) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Masters Degree (Extended) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Graduate Diploma *</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Graduate Certificate *</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Bachelor Honours Degree</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Bachelor Degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Associate Degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Advanced Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = ‘Higher Degrees’, also known as ‘postgraduate degrees/qualifications’
† = ‘Higher Degrees by Research’

**Australian Higher Education Qualification**
Australian Higher Education Qualification has the same meaning as *Australian higher education award* in section 5 of the TEQSA Act 2011.

**Overseas Higher Education Qualification**

Overseas Higher Education Qualification has the same meaning as *overseas higher education award* in section 5 of the TEQSA Act 2011.
PART A: Standards for Higher Education

Student Participation and Attainment

Admission

Admissions policies, requirements and procedures are documented, are applied fairly and consistently, and are designed to ensure that admitted students have the academic preparation and proficiency in English needed to participate in their intended study, and no known limitations that would be expected to impede their progression and completion.

The admissions process ensures that, prior to enrolment and before fees are accepted, students are informed of their rights and obligations, including:

- all charges associated with their proposed studies as known at the time and advice on the potential for changes in charges during their studies
- policies, arrangements and potential eligibility for credit for prior learning, and policies on changes to or withdrawal from offers, acceptance and enrolment, tuition protection and refunds of charges.

Admission and other contractual arrangements with students, or where legally required, with their parent or guardian, are in writing and include any particular conditions of enrolment and participation for undertaking particular courses of study that may not apply to other courses more generally, such as health requirements for students undertaking clinical work, requirements for security checks, particular language requirements and particular requirements of work placements.

Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning

Assessment of prior learning is undertaken for the purpose of granting credit for units of study within a course of study or toward the completion of a qualification, such assessment is conducted according to institutional policies, the result is recorded and students receive timely written advice of the outcome.

Credit through recognition of prior learning is granted only if:

- students granted such credit are not disadvantaged in achieving the expected learning outcomes for the course of study or qualification, and
- the integrity of the course of study and the qualification are maintained.

Orientation and Progression

Successful transition into courses of study is achieved through orientation programs that are tailored to the needs of student cohorts and include specific consideration for international students adjusting to living and studying in Australia.

Specific strategies support transition, including:

- assessing the needs and preparedness of individual students and cohorts
- undertaking early assessment or review that provides formative feedback on academic progress and is able to identify needs for additional support, and
- providing access to informed advice and timely referral to academic or other
Methods of assessment or monitoring that determine progress within or between units of study or in research training validly assess progress and, in the case of formative assessment, provide students with timely feedback that assists in their achievement of learning outcomes.

Processes that identify students at risk of unsatisfactory progress and provide specific support are implemented across all courses of study.

Trends in rates of retention, progression and completion of student cohorts through courses of study are monitored to enable review and improvement.

Students have equivalent opportunities for successful transition into and progression through their course of study, irrespective of their educational background, entry pathway, mode or place of study.

**Learning Outcomes and Assessment**

The expected learning outcomes for each course of study are specified, consistent with the level and field of education of the qualification awarded, and informed by national and international comparators.

The specified learning outcomes for each course of study encompass discipline-related and generic outcomes, including:

- specific knowledge and skills and their application that characterise the field(s) of education or disciplines involved
- generic skills and their application in the context of the field(s) of education or disciplines involved
- knowledge and skills required for employment and further study related to the course of study, including those required to be eligible to seek registration to practise where applicable, and
- skills in independent and critical thinking suitable for life-long learning.

Methods of assessment are consistent with the learning outcomes being assessed, are capable of confirming that all specified learning outcomes are achieved and that grades awarded reflect the level of student attainment.

On completion of a course of study, students have demonstrated the learning outcomes specified for the course of study, whether assessed at unit level, course level, or in combination.

On completion of research training, students have demonstrated specific and generic learning outcomes related to research, including:

- a detailed understanding of the specific topic of their research, within a broad understanding of the field of research
- capacity to scope, design and conduct research projects independently
- technical research skills and competence in the application of research methods, and
- skills in analysis, critical evaluation and reporting of research, and in presentation, publication and dissemination of their research.

Assessment of major assessable research outputs for higher degrees by research, such as theses, dissertations, exegeses, creative works or other major works arising from a candidate’s research incorporates assessment by at least two assessors with support.
international standing in the field of research, who are independent of the conduct of the research, competent to undertake the assessment and do not have a conflict of interest, and:

for doctoral degrees, are external to the higher education provider, and

for masters degrees by research, at least one of whom is external to the higher education provider.

The outputs arising from research training contribute to the development of the field of research, practice or creative field and, in the case of doctoral degrees, demonstrate a significant original contribution.

Qualifications and Certification

Qualifications, other than higher doctoral or honorary qualifications, are awarded only if a course of study leads to the award of that qualification and all of the requirements of the course of study have been fulfilled.

Higher doctoral qualifications require significant, sustained original contributions to a field of research over and above the requirements of a doctoral degree and are awarded in accordance with the higher education provider’s specific policies and academic governance requirements for the award of Higher Doctoral Degrees.

When an Australian Higher Education Qualification is offered, the course of study leading to the qualification is either self-accredited under authority to self-accredit or accredited by TEQSA and the learning outcomes for the qualification are consistent with the level classification for that qualification in the Australian Qualifications Framework.

Awardees of qualifications are issued with authorised certification documentation including a testamur, and either a record of results or an Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (graduation statement) that state correctly:

- the name of the registered higher education provider issuing the documentation
- the full name of the person to whom the documentation applies
- the date of issue
- the name and office of the person authorised by the higher education provider to issue the documentation, and
- if the qualification is recognised in the Australian Qualifications Framework, the testamur and/or the graduation statement is certified with either the logo of the Australian Qualifications Framework or the words, ‘This qualification is recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework’.

All certification documentation issued by the higher education provider is:

- unambiguously issued by the registered higher education provider
- readily distinguishable from other certification documents issued by the higher education provider
- protected against fraudulent issue
- traceable and authenticable
- designed to prevent unauthorised reproduction, and
- replaceable by the higher education provider through an authorised and verifiable process.
Testamurs state correctly, in addition to the requirements for all certification documentation:

- the full title of the qualification awarded, including the field or discipline of study
- any subsidiary component of the qualification (such as integrated honours, an area of specialisation or a major study), and
- if any parts of the course of study or assessment leading to the qualification were conducted in a language other than English, except for the use of another language to develop proficiency in that language.

Records of results state correctly, in addition to the requirements for all certification documentation:

- the full name of all courses and units of study undertaken and when they were undertaken and completed
- credit granted through recognition of prior learning
- the weighting of units within courses of study
- the grades and/or marks awarded for each unit of study undertaken and, if applicable, for the course overall
- where grades are issued, an explanation of the grading system used
- where a course of study includes a significant particular focus of study such as honours, an area of specialisation or a major study, a definition of that component of significant focus, and
- any parts of a course or units of study or assessment that were conducted in a language other than English, except for the use of another language to develop proficiency in that language.

Graduation statements contain, in relation to a particular course of study and the qualification awarded, the information contained in a record of results, presented in a form that conforms with the requirements for an Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement.

Qualifications that do not align with a qualification that is recognised in the Australian Qualifications Framework are not described using the nomenclature of the Australian Qualifications Framework or implied to be a qualification recognised in the Australian Qualifications Framework or an equivalent qualification.

Students who complete one or more units of study that do not lead to the award of a qualification have access to an authorised record of results for the units undertaken.

Any documentation issued with the award of an honorary qualification unambiguously identifies the qualification as an honorary qualification.

**Learning Environment**

**Facilities and Infrastructure**

Facilities, including facilities where external placements are undertaken, are fit for their educational and research purposes and accommodate the numbers and educational and research activities of the students and staff who use them.

Secure access to electronic information and adequate electronic communication services
is available continuously (allowing for reasonable outages for maintenance) to students and staff during periods of authorised access, except for locations and circumstances that are not under the direct control of the provider.

The learning environment, whether physical, virtual or blended, and associated learning activities support academic interactions among students outside of formal teaching.

**Diversity and Equity**

Institutional policies, practices and approaches to teaching and learning are designed to accommodate student diversity, including the under-representation and/or disadvantage experienced by identified groups, and create equivalent opportunities for academic success regardless of students' backgrounds.

Specific consideration is given to the recruitment, admission, participation and completion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Participation, progress, and completion by identified student subgroups are monitored and the findings are used to inform admission policies and improvement of teaching, learning and support strategies for those subgroups.

**Wellbeing and Safety**

All students are advised of the actions they can take, the staff they may contact and the support services that are accessible if their personal circumstances are having an adverse effect on their education.

Timely, accurate advice on access to personal support services is available, including for access to emergency services, health services, counselling, legal advice, advocacy, and accommodation and welfare services.

The nature and extent of support services that are available for students are informed by the needs of student cohorts, including mental health, disability and wellbeing needs.

A safe environment is promoted and fostered, including by advising students and staff on actions they can take to enhance safety and security on campus and online.

There is a critical-incident policy together with readily accessible procedures that cover the immediate actions to be taken in the event of a critical incident and any follow up required.

**Student Grievances and Complaints**

Current and prospective students have access to mechanisms that are capable of resolving grievances about any aspect of their experience with the higher education provider, its agents or related parties.

There are policies and processes that deliver timely resolution of formal complaints and appeals against academic and administrative decisions without charge or at reasonable cost to students, and these are applied consistently, fairly and without reprisal.

Institutional complaints-handling and appeals processes for formal complaints include provision for confidentiality, independent professional advice, advocacy and other support for the complainant or appellant, and provision for review by an appropriate independent third party if internal processes fail to resolve a grievance.

Decisions about formal complaints and appeals are recorded and the student concerned
is informed in writing of the outcome and the reasons, and of further avenues of appeal where they exist and where the student could benefit.

If a formal complaint or appeal is upheld, any action required is initiated promptly.

**Teaching**

**Course Design**

The design for each course of study is specified and the specification includes:

- the qualification(s) to be awarded on completion
- structure, duration and modes of delivery
- the units of study (or equivalent) that comprise the course of study
- entry requirements and pathways
- expected learning outcomes, methods of assessment and indicative student workload
- compulsory requirements for completion
- exit pathways, articulation arrangements, pathways to further learning, and for a course of study leading to a Bachelor Honours, Masters or Doctoral qualification, includes the proportion and nature of research or research-related study in the course.

The content and learning activities of each course of study engage with advanced knowledge and inquiry consistent with the level of study and the expected learning outcomes, including:

- current knowledge and scholarship in relevant academic disciplines
- study of the underlying theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the academic disciplines or fields of education or research represented in the course, and
- emerging concepts that are informed by recent scholarship, current research findings and, where applicable, advances in practice.

Teaching and learning activities are arranged to foster progressive and coherent achievement of expected learning outcomes throughout each course of study.

Each course of study is designed to enable achievement of expected learning outcomes regardless of a student’s place of study or the mode of delivery.

Where professional accreditation of a course of study is required for graduates to be eligible to practise, the course of study is accredited and continues to be accredited by the relevant professional body.

**Staffing**

The staffing complement for each course of study is sufficient to meet the educational, academic support and administrative needs of student cohorts undertaking the course.

The academic staffing profile for each course of study provides the level and extent of academic oversight and teaching capacity needed to lead students in intellectual
inquiry suited to the nature and level of expected learning outcomes.

Staff with responsibilities for academic oversight and those with teaching and supervisory roles in courses or units of study are equipped for their roles, including having:

- knowledge of contemporary developments in the discipline or field, which is informed by continuing scholarship or research or advances in practice
- skills in contemporary teaching, learning and assessment principles relevant to the discipline, their role, modes of delivery and the needs of particular student cohorts, and
- a qualification in a relevant discipline at least one level higher than is awarded for the course of study, or equivalent relevant academic or professional or practice-based experience and expertise, except for staff supervising doctoral degrees having a doctoral degree or equivalent research experience.

Teachers who teach specialised components of a course of study, such as experienced practitioners and teachers undergoing training, who may not fully meet the standard for knowledge, skills and qualification or experience required for teaching or supervision (3.2.3) have their teaching guided and overseen by staff who meet the standard.

Teaching staff are accessible to students seeking individual assistance with their studies, at a level consistent with the learning needs of the student cohort.

Learning Resources and Educational Support

The learning resources, such as library collections and services, creative works, notes, laboratory facilities, studio sessions, simulations and software, that are specified or recommended for a course of study, relate directly to the learning outcomes, are up to date and, where supplied as part of a course of study, are accessible when needed by students.

Where learning resources are part of an electronic learning management system, all users have timely access to the system and training is available in use of the system.

Access to learning resources does not present unexpected barriers, costs or technology requirements for students, including for students with special needs and those who study off campus.

Students have access to learning support services that are consistent with the requirements of their course of study, their mode of study and the learning needs of student cohorts, including arrangements for supporting and maintaining contact with students who are off campus.

Research and Research Training

Research

Research and its associated activities are conducted in accordance with a research policy framework that is designed to achieve:

- ethical conduct of research and responsible research practice
- clarification of ownership and management of intellectual property
- successful management of research partnerships
clarification of requirements for publication and authorship, and
resolution of allegations of misconduct in research.

Research is conducted, or overseen, by staff with qualifications, research experience and
skills relevant to the type of research undertaken and their role.

A system for accurate and up-to-date recording of the research outputs of staff and
research students is maintained.

Research Training

Research training is guided by an institutional research training policy framework that is
designed to achieve:

definition and recognition of the rights and responsibilities of research
students and supervisors
induction and orientation of research students and supervisors to their roles
monitoring of the progress of research students
assessment and examination of students’ work
independence of examiners
presentation and communication of research outputs by students, and
resolution of disputes.

Students are admitted to research training only where the training can be provided in a
supervisory and study environment of research activity or other creative endeavour,
inquiry and scholarship, and the supervision and resources required for their project
are available.

Each research student is supported by continuing supervisory arrangements, including:

a principal supervisor who holds a doctoral degree, or has equivalent
research experience, and who is active in research and publishing in, or
otherwise making original contributions to, a relevant field or discipline
at least one associate supervisor with relevant research expertise, and
the principal supervisor is a member of the staff of the higher education
provider, or has a relevant adjunct appointment, or is otherwise formally
contracted and accountable to the provider for supervisory duties.

Research students participate in an induction to research that includes codes of conduct,
ethics, occupational health and safety, intellectual property and any additional
matters that are necessary for the type of research to be undertaken.

Coursework that is included as a formal assessable requirement in a course of study that
involves research training, whether as a component of or an adjunct to the research
training, meets the academic governance and quality assurance requirements
required of other coursework offered by the higher education provider.

Institutional Quality Assurance

Course Approval and Accreditation

There are processes for internal approval of the delivery of a course of study, or, where a
provider has authority to self-accredit, internal accreditation, of all courses of study leading to a higher education qualification.

Course approval and self-accreditation processes are overseen by peak institutional academic governance processes and they are applied consistently to all courses of study, before the courses are first offered and during re-approval or re-accreditation of the courses.

A course of study is approved or accredited, or re-approved or re-accredited, only when:

- the course of study meets, and continues to meet, the applicable Standards of the Higher Education Standards Framework
- the decision to (re-)approve or (re-)accredit a course of study is informed by overarching academic scrutiny of the course of study that is competent to assess the design, delivery and assessment of the course of study independently of the staff directly involved in those aspects of the course, and
- the resources required to deliver the course as approved or accredited will be available when needed.

**Academic and Research Integrity**

There are policies that promote and uphold the academic and research integrity of courses and units of study, research and research training activities, and institutional policies and procedures address misconduct and allegations of misconduct.

Preventative action is taken to mitigate foreseeable risks to academic and research integrity including misrepresentation, fabrication, cheating, plagiarism and misuse of intellectual property, and to prevent recurrences of breaches.

Students are provided with guidance on what constitutes academic or research misconduct and the development of good practices in maintaining academic and research integrity.

Academic and research integrity and accountability for academic and research integrity are maintained in arrangements with any other party involved in the provision of higher education, including placements, collaborative research, research training and joint award of qualifications.

**Monitoring, Review and Improvement**

All accredited courses of study are subject to periodic (at least every seven years) comprehensive reviews that are overseen by peak academic governance processes and include external referencing or other benchmarking activities.

A comprehensive review includes the design and content of each course of study, the expected learning outcomes, the methods for assessment of those outcomes, the extent of students’ achievement of learning outcomes, and also takes account of emerging developments in the field of education, modes of delivery, the changing needs of students and identified risks to the quality of the course of study.

Comprehensive reviews of courses of study are informed and supported by regular interim monitoring, of the quality of teaching and supervision of research students, student progress and the overall delivery of units within each course of study.

Review and improvement activities include regular external referencing of the success of student cohorts against comparable courses of study, including:
analyses of progression rates, attrition rates, completion times and rates and, where applicable, comparing different locations of delivery, and

the assessment methods and grading of students’ achievement of learning outcomes for selected units of study within courses of study.

All students have opportunities to provide feedback on their educational experiences and student feedback informs institutional monitoring, review and improvement activities.

All teachers and supervisors have opportunities to review feedback on their teaching and research supervision and are supported in enhancing these activities.

The results of regular interim monitoring, comprehensive reviews, external referencing and student feedback are used to mitigate future risks to the quality of the education provided and to guide and evaluate improvements, including the use of data on student progress and success to inform admission criteria and approaches to course design, teaching, supervision, learning and academic support.

Delivery with Other Parties

Work-integrated learning, placements, other community-based learning and collaborative research training arrangements are quality assured, including assurance of the quality of supervision of student experiences.

When a course of study, any parts of a course of study, or research training are delivered through arrangements with another party(ies), whether in Australia or overseas, the registered higher education provider remains accountable for the course of study and verifies continuing compliance of the course of study with the standards in the Higher Education Standards Framework that relate to the specific arrangement.

Governance and Accountability

Corporate Governance

There is a formally constituted governing body, which includes independent members, that exercises competent governance oversight of and is accountable for all of the higher education provider’s operations in or from Australia, including accountability for the award of higher education qualifications, for continuing to meet the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework and for the provider’s representation of itself.

Members of the governing body:

are fit and proper persons, and

meet the Australian residency requirements, if any, of the instrument under which the provider is established or incorporated, or otherwise there are at least two members of the governing body who are ordinarily resident in Australia.
The governing body attends to governance functions and processes diligently and effectively, including:

- obtaining and using such information and advice, including independent advice and academic advice, as is necessary for informed and competent decision making and direction setting
- defining roles and delegating authority as is necessary for effective governance, policy development and management; and monitoring the implementation of those delegations
- confirming that the provision of higher education and research training and the conduct of research, whether by the provider or through an arrangement with another party, are governed by the registered provider's institutional policies, and the operations of the provider and any associated party(ies) are consistent with those policies
- undertaking periodic (at least every seven years) independent reviews of the effectiveness of the governing body and academic governance processes and ensuring that the findings of such reviews are considered by a competent body or officer(s) and that agreed actions are implemented, and
- maintaining a true record of the business of the governing body.

The governing body takes steps to develop and maintain an institutional environment in which freedom of intellectual inquiry is upheld and protected, students and staff are treated equitably, the wellbeing of students and staff is fostered, informed decision making by students is supported and students have opportunities to participate in the deliberative and decision making processes of the higher education provider.

Corporate Monitoring and Accountability

The provider is able to demonstrate, and the corporate governing body assures itself, that the provider is operating effectively and sustainably, including:

- the governing body and the entity comply with the requirements of the legislation under which the provider is established, recognised or incorporated, any other legislative requirements and the entity’s constitution or equivalent
- the provider’s future directions in higher education have been determined, realistic performance targets have been established, progress against targets is monitored and action is taken to correct underperformance
- the provider is financially viable and applies, and has the capacity to continue to apply, sufficient financial and other resources to maintain the viability of the entity and its business model, to meet and continue to meet the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework, to achieve the provider’s higher education objectives and performance targets and to sustain the quality of higher education that is offered
- the financial position, financial performance and cash flows of the entity are monitored regularly and understood, financial reporting is materially accurate, financial management meets Australian accounting standards, effective financial safeguards and controls are operating and financial statements are audited independently by a qualified auditor against Australian accounting and auditing standards
- risks to higher education operations have been identified and material risks are being managed and mitigated effectively
mechanisms for competent academic governance and leadership of higher education provision and other academic activities have been implemented and these are operating according to an institutional academic governance policy framework and are effective in maintaining the quality of higher education offered.

Educational policies and practices support participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and are sensitive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and cultures.

Qualifications are awarded legitimately.

There are credible business continuity plans and adequately resourced financial and tuition safeguards to mitigate disadvantage to students who are unable to progress in a course of study due to unexpected changes to the higher education provider's operations, including if the provider is unable to provide a course of study, ceases to operate as a provider, loses professional accreditation for a course of study or is otherwise not able to offer a course of study.

The occurrence and nature of formal complaints, allegations of misconduct, breaches of academic or research integrity and critical incidents are monitored and action is taken to address underlying causes, and lapses in compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework are identified and monitored, and prompt corrective action is taken.

**Academic Governance**

Processes and structures are established and responsibilities are assigned that collectively:

- Achieve effective academic oversight of the quality of teaching, learning, research and research training.
- Set and monitor institutional benchmarks for academic quality and outcomes.
- Establish and maintain academic leadership at an institutional level, consistent with the types and levels of higher education offered, and provide competent advice to the corporate governing body and management on academic matters, including advice on academic outcomes, policies and practices.

Academic oversight assures the quality of teaching, learning, research and research training effectively, including by:

- Developing, monitoring and reviewing academic policies and their effectiveness.
- Confirming that delegations of academic authority are implemented.
- Critically scrutinising, approving and, if authority to self-accredit is held, accrediting or advising on approving and accrediting, courses of study and their associated qualifications.
- Maintaining oversight of academic and research integrity, including monitoring of potential risks.
- Monitoring and initiating action to improve performance against institutional benchmarks for academic quality and outcomes.
- Critically evaluating the quality and effectiveness of educational innovations or.
proposals for innovations
  evaluating the effectiveness of institutional monitoring, review and
  improvement of academic activities, and
  monitoring and reporting to the corporate governing body on the quality of
  teaching, learning, research and research training.

Students have opportunities to participate in academic governance.

Representation, Information and Information Management

Representation

Representation of the higher education provider, its educational offerings and charges,
whether directly or through agents or other parties, is accurate and not misleading.

Courses or units of study that are offered or intended to be offered are not described as
accredited, whether by TEQSA or by a professional accreditation body for the
purposes of registration to practise, until such accreditation has been obtained.

Where units of study are offered separately from a course of study and are represented
as eligible for gaining credit towards a course of study or a qualification:
  the course(s) of study and qualification(s) for which credit may be gained are
  specified, and
  the terms on which credit may be granted are defined.

Agents and other parties that are involved in representing the higher education provider
are bound by formal contracts with the provider, their performance is monitored and
prompt corrective action is taken in the event or likelihood of misrepresentation or
unethical conduct.

Representations, whether expressed or implied, about the outcomes associated with
undertaking a course of study, eligibility for acceptance into another course of study,
employment outcomes or possible migration outcomes are not false or misleading.

Information for Prospective and Current Students

Accurate, relevant and timely information for students is publicly available and accessible,
including access for students with special needs, to enable informed decision making
about educational offerings and experiences.

Information for students is available prior to acceptance of an offer, written in plain
English where practicable, accompanied by an explanation of any technical or
specialised terms, and includes:
  information to assist in decisions about courses or units of study, including the
course design, prerequisites, assumed knowledge, when and where
courses/units are offered, application dates, arrangements for recognition
of prior learning, standing credit transfer arrangements, pathways to
employment and eligibility for registration to practise where applicable
  information to assist in planning for and participation in educational and other
activities, including contact points, advice about orientation and induction,
delivery arrangements, technical requirements for access to IT systems for
online activities, timetables, access to learning resources, avenues to
participate in decision making and opportunities to participate in student
representative bodies
information to outline the obligations of students and their liabilities to the higher education provider including expected standards of behaviour, financial obligations to the higher education provider, critical deadlines, policies for deferral, change of preference/enrolment and leave of absence, particular obligations of international students, disciplinary procedures, misconduct and grounds for suspension or exclusion
information to give access to current academic governance policies and requirements including admission, recognition of prior learning, transition, progression, assessment, grading, completion, qualifications, appeals, academic integrity, equity and diversity, intellectual property and withdrawal from or cancellation of enrolment
information to facilitate access to services and support including the types of services available such as educational resources including English language support, personal support services, cultural support and ancillary services, hours of availability, how to access services and emergency contact details where applicable
information to assist in resolution of grievances, including an explanation of processes for resolution of grievances and complaints and internal and external appeals processes, guidance on how to participate in the processes and sources of assistance including advocacy, and
information to assist international students studying in Australia if applicable, including indicative costs of living and studying in Australia, accommodation options, arrangements for health care and, where applicable, schooling obligations related to school-aged dependants (including the possibility that school fees may be incurred).

There are policies and processes that ensure information and advice given to international students holding or applying for an Australian student visa and decisions taken in relation to such students meet statutory requirements.

Students are given reasonable notice of changes to a higher education provider's operations including information about increases in fees and associated costs and any consequences that may affect their choice of, or ability to participate in, an intended course(s) of study.

Information Management

There is a repository of publicly-available current information about the higher education provider's operations that includes:

- the registered name of the higher education provider, trading name(s) if different, regulatory status and authority to provide courses of study to international students studying on an Australian student visa
- the instrument establishing the entity
- the members of the governing body and senior executive
- the financial standing of the provider
- indicative total student enrolments
- a high-level organisational chart that includes the organisational units that deliver courses of study, such as schools or faculties
the locations at which higher education is offered, including overseas if applicable
an overview of teaching campuses, facilities, learning resources and services provided for students
a list of all higher education courses of study that are offered, including indicative estimated annual enrolments
arrangements with other parties to deliver courses of study or to conduct research training
where public annual reports are required of the provider, the three most recent annual reports
how to lodge a complaint about the higher education provider, and contact details.
The list of all higher education courses of study within the repository of information includes:
the accreditation status of each course of study
the qualification(s) offered
whether the qualification is recognised in the Australian Qualifications Framework
confirmation of recognition of each course of study by the relevant professional body(ies) if such recognition is required for registration of graduates to practise
whether each course of study is authorised to be offered to international students studying on an Australian student visa, and
the duration of each course of study
Information systems and records are maintained, securely and confidentially as necessary to:
maintain accurate and up-to-date records of enrolments, progression, completions and award of qualifications
prevent unauthorised or fraudulent access to private or sensitive information, including information where unauthorised access may compromise academic or research integrity
document and record responses to formal complaints, allegations of misconduct, breaches of academic or research integrity and critical incidents, and
demonstrate compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework.
PART B: Criteria for Higher Education Providers

B1: Criteria for Classification of Higher Education Provider Categories

All providers of higher education that gain registration by TEQSA through meeting the Higher Education Standards Framework become ‘Higher Education Providers’. This title signals to the public that the provider is a bona fide provider of quality higher education in Australia.

Higher education providers are able to seek approval within a particular provider category under subsection 18(1) of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011. There are several provider categories that use the word ‘university’:

- Australian University
- Australian University College
- Australian University of Specialisation
- Overseas University
- Overseas University of Specialisation.

A higher education provider must meet the additional criteria for use of a provider category that uses the word ‘university’.

B1.1 “Higher Education Provider” Category

The higher education provider offers an Australian higher education qualification and/or an overseas higher education qualification

1. The higher education provider meets the Higher Education Standards Framework and offers at least one accredited course of study.
2. The higher education provider has a clearly articulated higher education purpose that includes a commitment to and support for free intellectual inquiry in its academic endeavours.
3. The higher education provider delivers teaching and learning that engage with advanced knowledge and inquiry.
4. The higher education provider’s academic staff are active in scholarship that informs their teaching, and are active in research when engaged in research student supervision.

B1.2 “Australian University” Category

The higher education provider offers an Australian higher education qualification

1. The higher education provider self-accredits and delivers undergraduate and postgraduate courses of study that meet the Higher Education Standards Framework across a range of broad fields of study (including Masters Degrees (Research) and Doctoral Degrees (Research) in at least three of the broad fields of study it offers).
2. The higher education provider has been authorised for at least the last five years to self-accredit at least 85% of its total courses of study, including Masters Degrees (Research) and Doctoral Degrees (Research) in at least three of the broad fields of study.

3. The higher education provider undertakes research that leads to the creation of new knowledge and original creative endeavour at least in those broad fields of study in which Masters Degrees (Research) and Doctoral Degrees (Research) are offered.

4. The higher education provider demonstrates the commitment of teachers, researchers, course designers and assessors to the systematic advancement and dissemination of knowledge.

5. The higher education provider demonstrates sustained scholarship that informs teaching and learning in all fields in which courses of study are offered.

6. The higher education provider identifies and implements good practices in student teaching and learning, including those that have the potential for wider dissemination nationally.

7. The higher education provider offers an extensive range of student services, including student academic and learning support, and extensive resources for student learning in all disciplines offered.

8. The higher education provider demonstrates engagement with its local and regional communities and demonstrates a commitment to social responsibility in its activities.

9. The higher education provider has systematic, mature internal processes for quality assurance and the maintenance of academic standards and academic integrity.

10. The higher education provider’s application for registration has the support of the relevant Commonwealth, State or Territory government.

B1.3 “Australian University College” Category

The higher education provider offers an Australian higher education qualification

1. The higher education provider has realistic and achievable plans to meet all the criteria for an “Australian University” Category within five years of its approval to use the title “Australian University College”.

2. The higher education provider self-acredits and delivers undergraduate and postgraduate courses of study that meet the Higher Education Standards Framework across a range of broad fields of study (including Masters Degrees (Coursework) in at least three broad fields of study and Masters Degrees (Research) and Doctoral Degrees (Research) in at least one of the broad fields of study it offers).

3. The higher education provider undertakes research that leads to the creation of new knowledge and original creative endeavour at least in those broad fields of study in which Masters Degrees (Research) and Doctoral Degrees (Research) are offered.

4. The higher education provider demonstrates the commitment of teachers, researchers, course designers and assessors to the systematic advancement and dissemination of knowledge.
5. The higher education provider demonstrates sustained scholarship that informs teaching and learning in all fields in which courses of study are offered.

6. The higher education provider identifies and implements good practices in student teaching and learning, including those that have the potential for wider dissemination nationally.

7. The higher education provider offers an extensive range of student services, including student academic and learning support, and extensive resources for student learning in all disciplines offered.

8. The higher education provider demonstrates engagement with its local and regional communities and demonstrates a commitment to social responsibility in its activities.

9. The higher education provider has systematic, well developed internal processes for quality assurance and the maintenance of academic standards and academic integrity.

10. The higher education provider’s application for registration has the support of the relevant Commonwealth, State or Territory government.

B1.4 “Australian University of Specialisation” Category

The higher education provider offers an Australian higher education qualification

1. The higher education provider self-accredits and delivers undergraduate and postgraduate courses of study that meet the Higher Education Standards Framework in one or two broad fields of study only (including Masters Degrees (Research) and Doctoral Degrees (Research) in these one or two broad fields of study it offers).

2. The higher education provider has been authorised for at least the last five years to self-accredit at least 85% of its total courses of study in one or two broad fields of study only, including Masters Degrees (Research) and Doctoral Degrees (Research) in these broad field/s of study.

3. The higher education provider undertakes research that leads to the creation of new knowledge and original creative endeavour at least in those broad fields of study in which Masters Degrees (Research) and Doctoral Degrees (Research) are offered.

4. The higher education provider demonstrates the commitment of teachers, researchers, course designers and assessors to the systematic advancement of knowledge.

5. The higher education provider demonstrates sustained scholarship that informs teaching and learning in all fields in which courses of study are offered.

6. The higher education provider identifies and implements good practices in student teaching and learning, including those that have the potential for wider dissemination nationally.

7. The higher education provider offers an extensive range of student services, including student academic and learning support, and extensive resources for student learning in all disciplines offered.

8. The higher education provider demonstrates engagement with its local and regional communities and demonstrates a commitment to social responsibility in its activities.
9. The higher education provider has systematic, mature internal processes for quality assurance and the maintenance of academic standards and academic integrity.

10. The higher education provider’s application for registration has the support of the relevant Commonwealth, State or Territory government.

B1.5 “Overseas University” Category

The higher education provider offers an overseas higher education qualification

1. The higher education provider is recognised as a university by its home country registration or accreditation authority or equivalent governmental authority, the standing and standards of which are acceptable to TEQSA.

AND

2. The higher education provider meets criteria equivalent to those for the “Australian University” Category.
B1.6 “Overseas University of Specialisation” Category

The higher education provider offers an overseas higher education qualification

1. The higher education provider is recognised as a university by its home country registration or accreditation authority or equivalent governmental authority, the standing and standards of which are acceptable to TEQSA.

AND

2. The higher education provider meets criteria equivalent to those for the “Australian University of Specialisation” Category.

B2: Criteria for Seeking Authority for Self-Accreditation of Courses of Study

Providers with Authority to Self-Accredit some or all Courses of Study

Registration of a higher education provider in certain categories of provider may confer self-accrediting authority on the provider. A higher education provider that is registered in the ‘Australian University’ provider category and meets the requirements under Section 45(1) of the TEQSA Act 2011 is authorised under the TEQSA Act 2011 to self-accredit each course of study that leads to a higher education qualification that it offers or confers. TEQSA will authorise a higher education provider that is registered in the ‘Australian University College’ provider category to self-accredit all of its courses of study. A higher education provider that is registered in the ‘Australian University of Specialisation’ provider category self-accredits some of its courses of study and TEQSA may authorise the provider to self-accredit all of the courses of study it offers, in its one or two broad fields of education only.

Types of Self-Accrediting Authority that may be Sought

1. A higher education provider that is registered in the ‘Higher Education Provider’, ‘Overseas University’ or ‘Overseas University of Specialisation’ provider category, or any other registered provider that proposes to extend the scope of its self-accrediting authority, may seek authorisation from TEQSA to self-accredit:

   a. one or more existing courses of study
   b. one or more existing courses of study and new course(s) of study at the same qualification level in the same narrow or broad field of education
   c. one or more existing courses of study and new course(s) of study at the same qualification level in nominated new narrow or broad field(s) of education
   d. one or more existing courses of study and new courses of study at one or more new qualification levels in the same narrow or broad field of education
   e. one or more existing courses of study and new courses of study at one or more qualification levels in nominated new narrow or broad fields of education, or
   f. all higher education courses of study that it offers, or may offer, irrespective of level of qualification or field of education.
Providers Seeking Authority from TEQSA to Self-Accredit Nominated Courses of Study

2. A provider that is seeking authorisation to self-accredit a nominated course(s) of study as specified in 1a – 1e above is able to demonstrate:

   a. sustained and sustainable achievement of all of the Standards for Higher Education (Part A) that apply to the provider, including for course approval processes in particular and any delivery arrangements with other parties

   b. there are no unresolved compliance matters with TEQSA, or conditions outstanding from the most recent registration and course accreditations by TEQSA or a recognised registration or accreditation authority, and there is no history of significant continuing compliance problems in any other assessments, audits or reviews of its higher education operations conducted by TEQSA, professional bodies or government agencies

   c. a history over at least five years of successful delivery of the course(s) of study for which self-accrediting authority is sought, which is supported by evidence of student success based on analysis of trend data including completion rates and times, attrition rates and grades awarded that are referenced against credible national or international comparators and encompass at least three cohorts of graduates from each course of study

   d. where a cycle of review and improvement is required by the Standards for Higher Education (Part A) in relation to courses of study and their oversight (see Table 3), the provider has, in relation to all course(s) of study proposed for self-accreditation:

      i. completed at least one cycle of review and improvement in relation to all relevant standards

      ii. demonstrated successful implementation of evidence-based improvements arising from the reviews, and

      iii. has established these review and improvement activities as effective sustainable features of the provider’s operations across all courses of study.

Table 3 – Standards Referring to Review and Improvement Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher Education Standards</th>
<th>Applicable Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Learning Environment</td>
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<td>2.2 Diversity and Equity</td>
<td>2.2.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Institutional Quality Assurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.3 Monitoring, Review and Improvement</td>
<td>Entire section</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Governance and Accountability</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.1 Corporate Governance</td>
<td>6.1.2d</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.2 Corporate Monitoring and Accountability</td>
<td>6.2.1f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 Academic Governance</td>
<td>6.3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Providers Seeking Authority from TEQSA to Self-Accredit All Courses of Study

3. Where a provider is seeking self-accrediting authority under Criterion 1f for all courses of study that it offers, or may offer, in addition to meeting Criteria 2a – 2d, the provider is able to demonstrate the necessary capacity and capability to provide new courses leading to any level of higher education qualification in any field of education, including:

   a. processes for the design, delivery, accreditation, monitoring, quality assurance, review and improvement of existing courses of study that are transferrable to any new courses of study and any new level of qualification offered

   b. capability in planning and establishment of new courses of study in new broad fields of education

   c. capacity for competent academic governance, oversight and scrutiny of the accreditation of new courses in new broad fields of education

   d. sufficient breadth and depth of academic leadership, scholarship and expertise in relevant disciplines to guide entry into and sustain new levels and broad fields of higher education, and

   e. where professional accreditation is applicable to otherwise self-accredited courses, professional accreditation can reasonably be expected to be obtained and maintained.
EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015

Issued by the authority of the Minister for Education and Training.

Subject: Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011
Making the second Higher Education Standards

Authority

Subsection 58(1) of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act) provides that the Minister may, by legislative instrument, make standards that, together with the Research Standards (made under subsection 58(2)), comprise the Higher Education Standards Framework.

Subsection 58(3) of the TEQSA Act requires that the Minister must not make a standard unless:

- a draft of the standard has been developed by the Higher Education Standards Panel (the Panel) established under Part 9 of the TEQSA Act,
- the Minister has consulted with each of the following about the draft:
  - the Council consisting of the Ministers for the Commonwealth and each State and Territory responsible for higher education (known currently as the COAG Education Council)
  - the Research Minister (the minister responsible for the Australian Research Council Act 2001), and
  - TEQSA, and
- the Minister has had regard to the draft developed by the Panel, and any advice or recommendations received from the Panel or those other parties.

The Threshold Standards are a subset of the Higher Education Standards Framework specified under subsection 58(1) of the TEQSA Act. The following Threshold Standards are made, respectively, under paragraphs 58(1)(a) to (d), inclusive:

- the Provider Registration Standards
- the Provider Category Standards
- the Provider Course Accreditation Standards, and
- the Qualification Standards.

For the purposes of defining the Threshold Standards, individual standards statements in the revised framework are ‘mapped’ to the relevant Threshold Standard in section 58 by means of Table 1 at Item 3 of the legislative instrument.

Purpose and Operation

The purpose of the legislative instrument is for the Minister to make a revised Higher Education Standards Framework (the Standards). By this legislative instrument the Minister makes the Standards under subsections 58(1)(a) to (d) inclusive of the TEQSA Act that set the requirements a higher education provider must meet – and continue to meet – in order to be registered by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) to operate in Australia. They provide the basis for the regulation of registered higher education providers by TEQSA. The Standards ensure that the barrier to entry into the higher education sector is set sufficiently high to underpin and protect the quality and reputation of the sector as a whole. They also establish a baseline for operational quality and integrity from which all providers can continue to build excellence and diversity.

The Standards also serve other broader purposes in Australian higher education including:

- an articulation of the expectations for provision of higher education in Australia as:
  - a guide to the quality of educational experiences that students should expect
  - a reference for international comparisons of the provision of higher education
  - a reference for other interested parties, and
- a model framework which higher education providers can themselves apply for the internal monitoring, quality assurance and quality improvement of their higher education activities.

2 Role of the Higher Education Standards Framework for Students

Protection of the quality of the educational experience of students is of prime importance among the objects of the TEQSA Act and is central to the Standards. The Standards inform students and other interested parties of the expectations on higher education providers regarding the delivery of higher education in or from Australia. The Standards also enable and support prospective and enrolled students to make informed choices through specific requirements for the provision of comprehensive, timely, accurate and publicly-available information about a higher education provider’s offerings and operations.

3 Consultation and Development of Revised Standards by the Higher Education Standards Panel

The Panel was established at the end of 2011 and began to review the initial higher education standards in early 2012, as required by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (Consequential Amendments and Transitional Provisions) Act 2011 (section 29).

In reviewing the initial standards, the Panel consulted widely over almost three years – a transparent, iterative consultation process with the higher education sector and other stakeholders, including state and territory governments and the Commonwealth Department of Education and Training. This included over 100 meetings with and presentations to interested higher education providers and other stakeholders, 15 Panel Communiqués distributed to a mailing list numbering approximately 1200, three formal Calls for Comment that received a total of 230 written submissions and, finally, a public information session on the full proposed revised Standards.

The Panel concluded that while the initial standards cover issues of corporate and academic governance, course accreditation and qualifications, they do not provide adequate assurance of the quality of higher education learning, teaching and research.
The Panel delivered advice on a revised standards framework to the Minister for Education and Training on 19 December 2014. The Panel's advice included revisions to almost all of the standards statements in the initial standards, along with additional standards on teaching and learning, research and information that had not been made in the initial standards.

The revised standards framework has been developed in accordance with the principles set out in the Australian Government Guide to Regulation. It takes account of the Objects of the TEQSA Act (section 3). It has been designed to facilitate TEQSA's compliance with the three Basic Principles for Regulation articulated in the TEQSA Act (section 13):

- the principle of regulatory necessity
- the principle of reflecting risk, and
- the principle of proportionate regulation.

The revised framework has been structured to better align with the operational characteristics of a typical higher education provider. This is expected to make the various standards easier to apply for the purposes of providers' own internal monitoring, reporting and governance activities, as well as for TEQSA's regulatory processes. For example, some issues that may have been dealt with more than once in the initial framework – e.g. in both the Provider Registration Standards and the Provider Course Accreditation Standards – are covered only once in the revised framework.

As a result, it is expected that TEQSA will more readily be able to use internal reports and information produced during the normal course of providers' business, or published on provider websites, as evidence when assessing compliance with the Standards. In turn, this will see a reduction, over time, in the red tape burden on higher education providers that is attributable to TEQSA's administration of the Standards.

As required, the Minister has consulted with the COAG Education Council and with TEQSA about the draft Standards developed by the Panel. All states and territories and TEQSA endorsed the revised framework.

4 Commencement

Item 4 of the legislative instrument specifies that the revised standards framework takes effect from 1 January 2017. All applications for higher education provider registration or reregistration and all applications for course accreditation or reaccreditation lodged on or after this date will be assessed against the revised standards framework.

The application and savings provision at Item 5 notes that TEQSA will continue to assess any registration, reregistration, accreditation or reaccreditation applications made before 1 January 2017 against the requirements of the 2011 legislative instrument until a decision has been made.

5 Regulatory impact

The review of the initial higher education standards undertaken by the Higher Education Standards Panel was certified as having followed a similar process to that required for a Regulation Impact Statement. The change in regulatory burden to business, community organisations and individuals has been quantified using the Australian Government’s Regulatory Burden Measurement framework.

The Office of Best Practice Regulation has agreed that implementation of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 will deliver a net reduction in annual regulatory burden of $2.538 million (OBPR reference 17288).
6 Structure of the revised Higher Education Standards Framework

The standards framework consists of two parts:

7 Part A: Standards for Higher Education

This Part sets out the minimum acceptable requirements for the provision of higher education in or from Australia by higher education providers registered under the TEQSA Act.

The Standards for Higher Education are organised into seven 'Domains':

1. Student Participation and Attainment
2. Learning Environment
3. Teaching
4. Research and Research Training
5. Institutional Quality Assurance
6. Governance and Accountability
7. Representation, Information and Information Management

8 Part B: Criteria for Higher Education Providers

B1: Classification of Higher Education Provider Categories
B2: Seeking Authority for Self-Accreditation of Courses of Study

Each ‘Domain’ of the Standards is segmented into ‘sections’ and these sections in turn contain a number of ‘Standards Statements’. These statements are the actual ‘Standards’; the headings of the domains and sections are to assist in navigating the document only.

The first Domain of Part A (Student Participation and Attainment) covers the education-related experiences of students from admission through to attainment of a certified qualification(s) (or part thereof).

- The Standards in this Domain focus primarily on a course of study, but they apply equally to the completion of units of study.

The remainder of the Domains focus on the actions taken by the higher education provider to achieve the educational outcomes expected for students.

- The second Domain (Learning Environment) focuses on the nature and quality of the learning environment provided, whether physical, on or off campus, virtual or blended.

- The Standards for Teaching and for Research and Research Training (Domains 3 and 4) focus on the academic activities of the higher education provider that guide and facilitate learning and, in the case of research and research training, contribute to new knowledge.

- Domains 5 (Institutional Quality Assurance) and 6; (Governance and Accountability) focus on the mechanisms that are established by the higher education provider to assure itself of the quality of the higher education it provides and maintain effective governance of its operations (both academic and corporate governance).

- The final Domain (Representation, Information and Information Management) encompasses the higher education provider’s representation of itself to prospective students and others, the provision of information to prospective and enrolled students to enable informed participation in their educational experience, and the information management systems that support the higher education provider’s higher education operations.
The criteria in Part B are relevant to particular types of higher education providers, including classification as a “university” and providers seeking authority to self-accredit a course(s) of study that they deliver.

The standards framework incorporates the education-related elements of the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007* (established under the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000*).

The Standards do not seek to encompass all areas of all providers’ activities, such as a provider’s engagement with its alumni. Nor do the Standards seek to directly address some aspects of the experience of students that are not realistically under the control of the provider, such as long-term career outcomes.

The Panel estimated that around half of the revised Standards are the result of re-writing or editing the existing standards. Around a quarter result from aligning the Standards with the requirements of the *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students*. The remainder are new, covering the previously mooted but undefined standards relating to learning, teaching, research and information management.

9 Definitions

Definitions are provided for the term “Higher Education Qualification” and the two related terms “Australian Higher Education Qualification” and “Overseas Higher Education Qualification”. These draw on the definition of “Higher Education Award” and its derivatives in section 5 of the TEQSA Act. The Standards, however, adopt the ‘qualification’ terminology of the *Australian Qualifications Framework*. Table 2 is intended to make explicitly clear to the casual reader the types of qualifications encompassed within higher education, which the Standards relate to.

10 Content of the Standards

Domain 1: Student Participation and Attainment

- Section 1.1 – Admission – covers the requirements that must be met by providers when admitting students, information that must be provided to students regarding a particular course of study before they enrol, ensuring admission policies are fairly and consistently applied and that admission arrangements are in writing, including any requirements that are specific to the course.
- Section 1.2 – Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning – requires credit transfer (advanced standing) and recognition of prior learning (RPL) to be policy based, to ensure the integrity of courses and qualifications.
- Section 1.3 – Orientation and Progression – outlines the requirements for orientation and progression to ensure students are successfully transitioned into institutions and that special needs are met for individual students.
- Section 1.4 – Learning Outcomes and Assessment – requires that learning outcomes are specified and assessment is consistent with the requirements of the learning outcomes.
- Section 1.5 – Qualifications and Certification – lists the requirements for qualifications and certification which are fundamentally based on the *Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)*.
Domain 2: Learning Environment

- Section 2.1 – Facilities and Infrastructure – identifies the requirements for teaching and learning facilities and infrastructure, including information technology, to ensure facilities are fit for purpose.

- Section 2.2 – Diversity and Equity – requires policies and processes to accommodate and promote diversity and equity among student populations, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, be in place and actively monitored.

- Section 2.3 – Wellbeing and Safety – identifies the need for and imposes requirements in respect of a safe environment and the availability of appropriate support services to promote student wellbeing.

- Section 2.4 – Student Grievances and Complaints – lists the requirements for student grievance and complaints in the instance of dissatisfaction with institutional or learning experiences.

Domain 3: Teaching

- Section 3.1 – Course Design – identifies course design specifications, learning activities and learning resource requirements, consistent with the level of study; and the need for professional accreditation of courses where this is required in order for graduates to be eligible to practise.

- Section 3.2 – Staffing – sets out requirements for the availability, skills and knowledge of teaching staff.

- Section 3.3 – Learning Resources and Educational Support – outlines the need for appropriate educational support mechanisms, as well as adequate physical resources and infrastructure that are fit for purpose.

Domain 4: Research and Research Training

- Section 4.1 – Research – covers resources, ethics, supervision and admission policies needed for the conduct of research activity.

- Section 4.2 – Research Training – specifies the need to appropriately support research students, including through induction and adequate supervision.

Domain 5: Institutional Quality Assurance

- Section 5.1 – Course Approval and Accreditation – covers internal mechanisms to assure quality such as policies for course approvals, accreditation and delivery.

- Section 5.2 – Academic and Research Integrity – requires that policies are in place to deal with misconduct including cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation and misuse of intellectual property and that these policies are actively administered to ensure the integrity of academic and research activity.

- Section 5.3 – Monitoring, Review and Improvement – requires that the quality of education offerings be continuously monitored and reviewed to maintain and enhance their quality and effectiveness, including a comprehensive review of each course of study at least every seven years.

- Section 5.4 – Delivery with Other Parties – identifies that the delivery of education by a third party must be quality assured and that the higher education provider remains accountable for the quality of all education delivered through third parties.
Domain 6: Governance and Accountability

- **Section 6.1 – Corporate Governance** – requires the entity to have a formally constituted governing body that includes independent members and sets out functions and obligations of the governing body.
- **Section 6.2 – Corporate Monitoring and Accountability** – requires the provider to demonstrate and the corporate governing body to assure themselves that the provider is operating effectively and sustainably, including in the areas of ongoing financial viability and risk management, having in place credible business plans and a strong compliance regime.
- **Section 6.3 – Academic Governance** – requires the entity to have processes and structures established and responsibilities assigned in relation to academic oversight to assure the quality of teaching, learning, research and research training.

Domain 7: Representation, Information and Information Management

- **Section 7.1 – Representation** – obliges a provider to represent itself accurately and in a manner that is not misleading and to assure all agency arrangements through the use of formal contracts.
- **Section 7.2 – Information for Prospective and Current Students** – sets out the types of information that must be available to prospective and enrolled students to support informed decision-making about the provider’s higher education offerings.
- **Section 7.3 – Information Management** – specifies a range of information about the higher education provider that must be available to the general public and the need for accurate and up-to-date record keeping.

Part B1: Criteria for Classification of Higher Education Provider Categories

- Part B1 sets out the course offering, research and related characteristics a provider needs in order to be registered by TEQSA under the various provider categories available, namely: Higher Education Provider (the basic classification), Australian University, Australian University College, Australian University of Specialisation, Overseas University and Overseas University of Specialisation.

Part B2: Criteria for Seeking Authority for Self-Accreditation of Courses of Study

- Part B2 identifies the requirements a higher education provider must meet for TEQSA to grant it the authority to self-accredit some or all of its courses of study.

**11 Application of the Standards for Internal Purposes by Higher Education Providers**

The Standards are grounded in the core characteristics of the provision of higher education. In consequence, they are intended to be useful to higher education providers as a framework for internal monitoring of the quality of their higher education activities. The Standards encompass the matters that a higher education provider would ordinarily be expected to address in the course of understanding and monitoring its higher education activities and managing any associated risks. Each Standard represents an underlying area of risk(s) to be managed. This may entail a risk to the quality of education delivered, to the experiences of students in relation to a higher education provider, to the quality of learning outcomes on graduation, to the reputation of higher education in Australia or a combination of different types of risks.
From the standpoint of internal use by higher education providers, the Standards focus on aspects of a higher education provider’s operations in different but inter-related ways. Domain 1 (Student Participation and Attainment) focuses primarily on the educational experience for students, while Domains 2-4 (Learning Environment, Teaching, and Research and Research Training) focus on the academic activities of the provider and the environments in which they occur. Together, Domains 1-4 address in specific ways a variety of risks to the quality of higher education and the experiences of students.

Domains 5 (Institutional Quality Assurance) and 6 (Governance and Accountability) are more overarching in nature. They encompass the ways in which a higher education provider would ordinarily maintain oversight of its higher education operations and be able to assure itself, in the normal course of its business, that the requirements of the Standards are being met. Deficiencies identified by a higher education provider in meeting these Standards would be expected to cause deeper examination of the provider’s compliance with the Standards overall, guided by the risks that have been identified.

The principles set out in Domain 7 (Representation, Information and Information Management) underpin a provider’s effective engagement with all of its internal and external stakeholders, including students and the general public.

Applicability of the Standards to Particular Higher Education Providers or Categories of Higher Education Provider

Under the TEQSA Act, registered higher education providers are obliged to meet and continue to meet the Threshold Standards. The Standards are applicable, irrespective of the category of provider. The Standards cover all modes of participation and delivery, and all categories of students.

Some elements of Part A will not apply to particular higher education providers. For example, Standards related to delivery arrangements between a registered higher education provider and third parties will not apply where no such arrangements exist. Similarly, the Research Standards are not applicable to higher education providers that do not undertake research. However, if research training is conducted, the Standards in sections 4.1 (research) and 4.2 (research training) both apply.

In accordance with the basic principles for regulation in the TEQSA Act, the revised Standards support TEQSA’s continued use of a risk-based, targeted approach to determining the scope of assessment required. Providers with a sound history of higher education delivery and no significant compliance or risk concerns may benefit from a more limited assessment, requiring less evidence and information to be gathered at the time of application. Newer providers and those with compliance or risk concerns may be required to provide evidence against the full range of Standards.
Statement of Compatibility with Human Rights

Prepared in accordance with Part 3 of the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015

This Legislative Instrument is compatible with the human rights and freedoms recognised or declared in the international instruments listed in section 3 of the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011.

Overview of the Legislative Instrument

The Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 (the Standards) sets out the requirements that a higher education provider must meet – and continue to meet – in order to be registered by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) to operate in Australia as a provider of higher education.

The Standards are the basis for TEQSA’s regulation of higher education providers in Australia. TEQSA assesses an organisation’s compliance with the Standards when considering:

- an application to be registered as a new higher education provider
- an application from an existing higher education provider to be re-registered, in order to continue in this role (this is required at least every seven years)
- an application to accredit a new higher education course to be delivered by a registered higher education provider that does not have self-accrediting authority
- an application to re-accredit a higher education course that was previously accredited (required at least every seven years).

The Standards are also intended to provide a model framework for higher education providers to use in managing their own internal monitoring, quality assurance and quality improvement of their higher education activities.

The Standards are structured in two parts:

Part A – Standards for Higher Education – sets out the baseline acceptable requirements for the provision of higher education in or from Australia. It is broken into seven domains:

1. Student Participation and Attainment
2. Learning Environment
3. Teaching
4. Research and Research Training
5. Institutional Quality Assurance
6. Governance and Accountability
7. Representation, Information and Information Management

The first domain covers the requirements that must be met by providers when admitting students, information that must be available to students regarding a particular course of study before they enrol, and elements relating to the student experience, academic assessment and graduation.

Domains two, three and four focus on the requirements that a provider must meet in order to achieve the educational outcomes expected for students.

Domains five and six set out the basic requirements that an institution needs to have.
met to assure itself of the quality of its education and to maintain financial viability and effective governance of its operations.

The final domain addresses how a provider represents itself to prospective students, and the provision of information to prospective and enrolled students.

Part B – *Criteria for Higher Education Providers* – describes the different higher education provider categories, including requirements that must be met for a provider to use the word ‘university’ in its title, or self-accredit a course or courses that it offers.

**Human Rights Implications**

This legislative instrument engages the following human rights:

- the right to education under Article 13 of the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR)
- the right to freedom from discrimination under Article 2(2) of the ICESCR and Article 26 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR)
- the right to just and favourable conditions of work under Article 7 of the ICESCR
- the right to privacy under Article 17 of the ICCPR, and
- the rights of persons with disabilities under Articles 24 and 9 of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD).

**Right to Education**

The legislative instrument engages the right to education, which is set out in Article 13 of the ICESCR. This right recognises the important personal, societal, economic and intellectual benefits of education. It requires education be available, safe, and appropriately resourced, dependent on the needs of the child. Article 13 specifically identifies that higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means.

Overall, the Standards will help to ensure the highest standards of quality will continue to be upheld in the provision of higher education in Australia. They will enable more efficient and targeted activity by TEQSA which will ensure that higher education institutions have more time and resources to devote to doing what they do best – delivering the highest quality teaching, learning and research. This will benefit both Australian and international students, as well as the broader Australian community and economy.

**Right to freedom from discrimination**

The legislative instrument engages the right to freedom from discrimination, set out in Article 2(2) of the ICESCR and Article 26 of the ICCPR. Sections 1.1 (Admission) and 2.2 (Diversity and Equity) ensure that students from all backgrounds are admitted using policies that are fairly applied, with the academic preparation they need to participate in their intended study, with student diversity accommodated, including the under-representation and/or disadvantage experienced by identified groups. Specific consideration is given to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in recruitment, admission, participation, and completion.

The legislative instrument promotes the right to freedom from discrimination. Students from low socioeconomic status families, students with disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are historically underrepresented in higher education and can face additional challenges in undertaking and completing courses as a result of disadvantage. Ensuring they have ready access to the range of additional supports either available or able
to be funded through government and institutional equity programmes will help to reduce any additional barriers to achievement for students facing disadvantage. To the extent that the instrument permits differential treatment, through addressing the under-representation and/or disadvantage experience by identified groups in section 2.2, this differential treatment is legitimate.

**Right to just and favourable conditions of work**

The legislative instrument also engages the right to just and favourable conditions of work contained in article 7 of the ICESCR, including rights to safe and healthy working conditions and equal opportunity for advancement.

The legislative instrument promotes the right to just and favourable conditions of work by requiring higher education providers to offer learning and research environments that are safe, ethical and promote student wellbeing; and that corporate and academic governance structures and policies ensure the academic and operational integrity of its activities. The Standards require that facilities – including facilities where external placements are undertaken – are fit for their educational and research purposes and accommodate the numbers of students and staff that use them, as well as their educational and research activities. These are issues and protections that impact not just students undertaking learning and research training but also the teachers, research supervisors and other institutional staff that support the learning process. In addition, section 4.2 (Research Training) requires research students to undertake specific training on occupational health and safety as part of their induction, promoting the right to safe and healthy working conditions.

Teachers and supervisors must have opportunities to review feedback on their teaching and research supervision and be supported in enhancing these activities. A higher education provider’s governing body must develop and maintain an institutional environment in which freedom of intellectual inquiry is upheld and protected, where students and staff are treated equitably, and the wellbeing of students and staff is fostered. Taken together, these requirements promote a work and study environment that welcomes inquiry, is respectful of difference and promotes equal opportunity for advancement in learning and work.

**Right to privacy**

The legislative instrument engages the right to privacy. Article 17 of the ICCPR prohibits unlawful or arbitrary interferences with a person's privacy, family, home and correspondence. Collecting, using, storing, disclosing or publishing personal information amounts to an interference with privacy. Institutions must necessarily collect information about their students for a range of reasons – e.g. to manage admission (section 1.1), monitor progress (section 1.3 – Orientation and Progression), academic assessment (section 1.4 – Learning Outcomes and Assessment), monitor identified student subgroups to inform admission policies and improvement of teaching and support strategies (section 2.2) and to monitor the higher education provider’s own performance (section 5.3 – Monitoring, Review and Improvement). Higher education providers will also come into possession of a wide range of additional information through their delivery and assessment of higher education and research training.

The legislative instrument promotes the right to privacy through the protection of personal and sensitive information. Section 7.3 (Information Management) requires providers to manage their information systems securely and confidentially as needed, in order to maintain accurate records and prevent unauthorised access to private or sensitive information. This includes information where unauthorised access may compromise academic or research integrity.
Rights of persons with disabilities

The legislative instrument engages the rights of people with disabilities to education and to access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications under Articles 24 and 9 of the CRPD. States parties to the CRPD commit to ensuring reasonable accommodation of individuals’ requirements is provided and that effective individualised support measures are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.

The legislative instrument promotes the rights of people with disabilities by ensuring that higher education providers ensure their policies and operations take account of the specific needs of people with disability from a range of perspectives, including the academic and physical environments and student support needs. Sections 2.2 and 2.3 (Wellbeing and Safety) require higher education providers to ensure their policies and approaches to teaching and learning accommodate student diversity and that the nature and extent of support services available for students are informed by the needs of student cohorts, including mental health and disability. These requirements, along with existing requirements for education providers to comply with the Disability Standards for Education under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, will help ensure higher education providers will adequately support students with disability to develop their knowledge, skills and talents to their own benefit and the benefit of the wider Australian community and economy on an equal basis with other students.

Conclusion

The Legislative Instrument is compatible with human rights because it advances the protection of human rights in the delivery of higher education in Australia. To the extent that it may limit human rights, these limitations are reasonable, necessary, and proportionate.

SIMON BIRMINGHAM, Minister for Education and Training
Agenda item 16: Committee membership 2016-2017

The terms of reference for the Academic Standards and Policy Committee state as follows:

**Appointed Members**
The Academic Board shall appoint one member from each faculty and at least one undergraduate student member and one postgraduate student member nominated by members of the Board.

The current membership of the Committee was appointed in late 2013 and early 2014 for a period of membership expiring 31 December 2015.

Faculties will be contacted over the next couple of weeks seeking advice on nominating staff for appointment to the committee.