

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-2011**

Outcome 3 - Higher Education

DEEWR Question No.EW0513_11

Senator Hanson-Young provided in writing.

Question

TEQSA - PROCESS OF CONSULTATION

"Unfortunately, Gillard has chosen to develop these detailed proposals in private. She has not published a proposals paper, the public has not been invited to submit comments and participants' detailed criticisms and alternative proposals have not been published. So a member of the public can't judge the merits of the competing claims" (Moodie, 2010). i. What has been the extent of consultation to date with higher education institutions? ii. What will be the process of consultation prior to the TEQSA legislation being introduced in to the Parliament? iii. Is there any special urgency that would drive the Government to rush legislation in this complex area ahead of an open process of consultation?

Answer

The establishment of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) stems directly from the *Review of Australian Higher Education*(Bradley Review) conducted by an independent expert panel led by Emeritus Professor Denise Bradley AC which was commissioned by the Government in 2008.

The announcement for the establishment of TEQSA at the Universities Australia conference in March 2009 was the first step towards achieving the goals outlined in the Government's reform package to transform Australia's higher education system.

Following the announcement, the Government commenced consultation on the establishment of TEQSA with the higher education sector and the states and territories. In July 2010 the interim advisory arrangements for TEQSA were announced with the appointment of Professor Bradley, who led the Bradley Review, as Interim Chair and Mr Ian Hawke as the Interim CEO.

Professor Bradley's role is to act as the key liaison point for the higher education sector and as a source of independent advice to the Minister for Tertiary Education on the development of TEQSA and its approach to quality assurance and regulation.

Both Professor Bradley and Mr Hawke have undertaken extensive consultations with the higher education sector. Professor Bradley and Mr Hawke have met individually and collectively with members of Universities Australia (UA), the Council of Private Higher Education (COPHE) and the Australian Council for Private Education and Training

(ACPET) on several occasions to discuss the progress of TEQSA. Key relationships have also been built with other bodies including the National VET Regulator, the Australian Learning and Teaching Council, the Australian Qualifications Framework Council and the Australian Research Council.

In addition, Professor Bradley and Mr Hawke have presented at numerous conferences and fora, including the inaugural Dual Sector Forum, the Australian International Education Conference and the National Association of Prospective Student Advisors, speaking on the move towards national regulation and the role of TEQSA.

On 9 – 10 November representatives from the sector were invited to an exposure draft process on the TEQSA legislation. At the consultation, participants were taken through each part of the legislation and the latest draft *Higher Education Provider Standards*. Senior officers from DEEWR were on hand to answer any questions that were raised over the course of the two days.

The Commonwealth is considering the feedback received during the consultation in finalising the legislation.

All stakeholders will shortly be invited to comment on the latest draft of the *Higher Education Provider Standards*. Stakeholders have until 17 February 2011 to submit their responses. Feedback will inform a further draft of the Standards prior to their finalisation.