

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

QUESTION ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016

Outcome: Agency: TEQSA

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000291

Senator Carr, Kim asked on 03 June 2015, Proof Hansard page 38

TEQSA: Australian universities that have partnership providers with TAFE colleges

Question

Senator KIM CARR: On notice, can you provide me with advice as to what measures you have taken in regard to Australian universities that have partnership providers with TAFE colleges?

Prof. Saunders: I can certainly take that on notice and let you have that.

Senator KIM CARR: And what action you have taken to assure the quality of those programs?

Prof. Saunders: I can take that on notice.

Answer

The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) has provided the following response.

There are a number of standards within the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards)* that relate to the way all registered Higher Education Providers (HEP) engage, and manage, their partnership arrangements. These Threshold Standards include Provider Registration Standards 3.1, 3.4, 3.8, 4.5, 5.4, 6.3, 6.4, 6.7, 7.1 and 7.3.

Examples of the kinds of evidence TEQSA may consider during a scheduled review to assure the quality of partnerships between registered Higher Education Providers and their partners (whether onshore or offshore) include:

- copies of formal agreements with third parties
- student performance data for courses offered through third parties
- evidence of implementation of internal quality assurance processes relevant to partnership arrangements and any applicable management responses
- evidence that the HEP assures itself of the equivalency of the student experience at partner locations; including how access to physical and electronic library resources is equivalent for each cohort of students
- evidence that qualifications for academic staff at partner locations are assessed as equivalent (particularly for offshore partnerships)
- minutes of the corporate governing body and academic board demonstrating appropriate consideration of partnership arrangements
- a risk register that includes risks associated with partnership arrangements
- evidence of recent internal or external reviews undertaken of partnership arrangements, and/or the policies and procedures in place at the HEP to quality assure those arrangements, including evidence of management consideration and response

- evidence that student information documentation is current, accurate, adequate and openly accessible to all prospective and enrolled students, no matter where they are studying
- evidence of student grievance processes being in place, and where applicable, evidence that students studying with partner organisations have access to the same processes.

The specific mix of evidence required as part of a scheduled review will be determined by the relevant case manager, on the basis of the HEP's:

- regulatory history
- annual risk assessment
- consideration of the evidence that TEQSA already holds from previous assessments.

TEQSA has not taken any assurance action in relation to any of the partnership arrangements between Australian universities and TAFE colleges under the TEQSA Act to date.