



Australian Government
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency



Agency Multicultural Plan

2013-2015

TEQSA's Agency Multicultural Plan

Our vision for this plan

Although TEQSA's primary functions necessarily limit its interactions with the public, including culturally and linguistically diverse communities, TEQSA supports the principles outlined in the Multicultural Access and Equity Policy and its commitment to ensuring that all Australians receive equitable access to government services regardless of their cultural or linguistic background.

TEQSA's role is to maintain and enhance quality, diversity and innovation in the Australian higher education sector through nationally consistent regulation and quality assurance. As the national regulator, TEQSA's main stakeholders include higher education providers and peak and professional bodies with links to the higher education sector.

TEQSA is also committed to providing clear and accessible information to students and prospective students, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, about registered higher education providers, courses accredited by TEQSA and the provision of higher education in Australia generally.

Our agency

TEQSA was established as a new agency under the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (the TEQSA Act) in July 2011 to regulate and assure the quality of Australia's large, diverse and complex higher education sector. The Australian higher education system comprises universities and other higher education providers with and without self-accrediting authority. Qualifications available from higher education providers range from undergraduate awards (bachelor degrees, associate degrees or advanced diplomas) to postgraduate awards, including graduate diplomas, Masters degrees and doctoral degrees.

TEQSA commenced its regulatory activities in January 2012. TEQSA registers and assesses the performance of higher education providers against the Higher Education Standards Framework.

While TEQSA's key stakeholders are higher education providers and peak and professional bodies with links to the higher education sector, TEQSA also has a role in protecting students who undertake, or propose to undertake higher education in Australia by assuring the quality of higher education. In carrying out this role, TEQSA provides information relating to higher education in Australia.

All registered higher education providers are listed on the National Register of Higher Education Providers, accessed on the TEQSA website. The Register allows current and prospective students to verify information publicised by providers and to access key information which includes the trading name used for the provider's higher education operations, the provider category in which the provider is registered, the registration renewal date and the names of each higher education course of study accredited by TEQSA.

Our Agency's Multicultural Plan

TEQSA's Agency Multicultural Plan (AMP) was developed in consultation with TEQSA management and staff, the Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. The Chief

Finance and Operating Officer (COO) of TEQSA will be responsible for the implementation of TEQSA's AMP.

By implementing this AMP, TEQSA aims to improve its communications and engagement with current and prospective students and other stakeholders from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Focus area

TEQSA's AMP is focused on ensuring that people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities who undertake or may wish to undertake higher education have access to information about higher education providers, courses and higher education generally in Australia.

1. Leadership

Effective leadership will ensure that the actions and targets set out in TEQSA's Agency Multicultural Plan are achieved.

Minimum obligations

1.1 Executive accountability: Department or agency to assign a Senior Executive Officer to be responsible for implementation of multicultural access and equity obligations.

1.2 Department or agency commitment: Department or agency leadership to ensure that staff understand and are committed to multicultural access and equity implementation.

	<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Target</i>
1.1	<p>Executive accountability</p> <p>TEQSA will assign a Senior Executive Officer to be responsible for implementation of TEQSA's multicultural and equity obligations</p>	Chief Finance and Operating Officer (COO)	1 July 2013	Chief Finance and Operating Officer assigned as Multicultural Champion for TEQSA
1.2	<p>Department or agency commitment</p> <p>TEQSA will distribute the Agency Multicultural Plan (AMP) to all TEQSA staff</p>	COO	July 2013	TEQSA's AMP distributed to all staff
	<p>TEQSA will provide staff with information about the Government's Multicultural Access and Equity Policy</p>	COO	July 2013	TEQSA staff provided with information about Multicultural Access and Equity Policy
	<p>TEQSA will encourage staff to participate in Harmony Day activities</p>	Chief Commissioner/"Rangers" Social Club	21 March 2014 and 2015	TEQSA staff encouraged to participate in Harmony Day activities
1.3	<p>Other actions</p> <p>TEQSA will address multiculturalism considerations in the development of its Client Service Charter</p>	Director, Communications and International	July 2013	Client Service Charter addresses multiculturalism considerations

2. Engagement

Effective engagement and communication will ensure that people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities who undertake or may wish to undertake higher education have access to information about higher education providers, courses and higher education generally in Australia

Minimum obligations

2.1 Stakeholder engagement: Department or agency to have an engagement strategy to understand culturally and linguistically diverse communities' interactions with department or agency.

2.2 Language and communication: Department or agency to have a language and communication plan for culturally and linguistically diverse communities, including on the use of languages other than English and incorporating the use of interpreters and translators.

	<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Target</i>
2.1	<p>Stakeholder engagement</p> <p>TEQSA will utilise data from the inquiries it receives, feedback on its website, and those collected by the Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DIICCSRTE) and other available sources such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), to investigate and understand culturally and linguistically diverse communities' interactions with TEQSA.</p>	COO	December 2013	TEQSA has investigated culturally and linguistically diverse communities' interactions with TEQSA.
	<p>TEQSA will review its consultation strategies to ensure that they are easily accessible to all stakeholders, including consideration of culturally and linguistically diverse communities. This will include ensuring diverse options for accessing TEQSA such as direct email, correspondence, website, survey tools, forums, use of stakeholder or reference groups, face-to-face or a combination of these.</p>	Director, Communications and International	December 2013	Review of TEQSA's consultation strategies completed to ensure they are accessible to all stakeholders, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

	TEQSA will continue to engage on a regular basis with student organisations, including the Council of International Students Australia (CISA) (the peak representative body for international students) to promote understanding of TEQSA's role.	Director, Communications and International	From 1 July 2013	TEQSA engages on a regular basis with student organisations including CISA.
	TEQSA will review and identify any gaps in available communication channels for students, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.	Director, Communications and International	December 2013	Review and gap analysis completed in relation to TEQSA's engagement with students. TEQSA maintains presence on Agency websites, including AEI/Austrade (Study in Australia).
2.2	Language and communication TEQSA will develop a language and communication plan setting out TEQSA's approach to the use of languages other than English and incorporating the use of interpreters and translators as appropriate for regulatory business.	COO	July 2014	Language and Communication Plan developed.
	The 'TEQSA Snapshot' Information Sheet is made available in key identified languages.	Director, Communications and International	December 2013	TEQSA Snapshot translated into key languages.
	TEQSA will review the information for students published on TEQSA's website to ensure it is easy to understand and written in Plain English.	Director, Communications and International	December 2013	Review completed to ensure that all information published on TEQSA's website is easy to understand and written in Plain English.
	TEQSA will endeavour to address any reported difficulties accessing any of TEQSA's published documents in a timely manner.	Director, Communications and International	Ongoing	TEQSA addresses reported difficulties accessing any of TEQSA's published documents in a timely manner.

3. Performance

Inclusion of performance measures and arrangements for feedback from stakeholders will help TEQSA continue to improve its communication and engagement with people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Minimum obligations

3.1 Performance indicators and reporting: Department or agency to develop a set of KPIs relating to engagement with, or outcomes of services to, culturally and linguistically diverse clients.

3.2 Feedback: Department or agency to have arrangements in place to ensure affected culturally and linguistically diverse communities are able to provide feedback on department or agency multicultural access and equity performance.

	<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Target</i>
3.1	<p>Performance indicators and reporting</p> <p>Actions relating to communications with students and potential students are completed within the timeframes stated.</p>	COO	1 July 2015	TEQSA completes 100% of action items in AMP within timeframes.
3.2	<p>Feedback</p> <p>TEQSA will make arrangements to enable feedback to be provided on TEQSA's AMP via the TEQSA website.</p>	Director, Communications and International	July 2013	Arrangements in place to enable feedback to be provided on TEQSA's AMP.

4. Capability

Research and data will assist TEQSA to better understand culturally and linguistically diverse communities' interactions with TEQSA and culturally competent staff will help us engage more effectively with those stakeholders.

Minimum obligations

4.1 Cultural competency: Department or agency to have training and development measures to equip staff with cultural competency skills.

4.2 Research and data: Department or agency to collect ethnicity data on the culturally and linguistically diverse groups with which the department or agency engages and to which it delivers services directly or indirectly.

	<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Target</i>
4.1	<p>Cultural competency</p> <p>TEQSA will implement the APS-wide cultural competency eLearning to be developed by DIAC to equip TEQSA staff with cultural competency skills where directly relevant to their roles.</p>	COO	December 2013	TEQSA implements training to equip staff with cultural competency skills where directly relevant to their roles.
4.2	<p>Research and data</p> <p>TEQSA will utilise information from the inquiries it receives directly, the student data it collects directly from higher education providers, and student data collected by the Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DICCSRTE) where appropriate.</p>	Director, Information Management and Director, Communications and International	December 2013	TEQSA utilises data collected from various sources on culturally and linguistically diverse groups with which the Agency engages.

5. Responsiveness

Accessible information and effective public interaction will strengthen TEQSA's responsiveness to stakeholders, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Minimum obligations

5.1 Standards: Any whole-of-government standards and guidelines developed by the department or agency must address multicultural access and equity considerations.

5.2 Policy, program and service delivery: Provision to ensure that policies, programs, community interactions and service delivery (whether in-house or outsourced) are effective for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

5.3 Outsourced services: Where relevant, provision for incorporation of multicultural access and equity requirements into contracts, grant agreements and related guidance material of which the department or agency has carriage.

	<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Target</i>
5.1	<p>Standards</p> <p>TEQSA will adhere to relevant Whole-of-Government standards and guidelines that have incorporated access and equity considerations.</p>	COO	July 2014	TEQSA adheres to relevant Whole-of-Government standards and guidelines that have incorporated access and equity considerations.
5.2	<p>Policy, program and service delivery TEQSA will review strategies for communicating with students and prospective students to ensure they are effective, taking into account the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse communities.</p>	Director, Governance and Communications	December 2013	Review of communication strategies completed to ensure they are effective for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
5.3	<p>Outsourced services</p> <p>Where relevant, TEQSA will consider provision for multicultural access and equity issues for outsourced service arrangements.</p>	COO	July 2014	Provision for multicultural access and equity issues considered for outsourced service arrangements where relevant.

6. Openness

Openness about the obligations in TEQSA's Agency Multicultural Plan reflects the Agency's commitment to improving its communication and engagement with students and potential students from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Minimum obligations

6.1 Publishing: Department or agency to publish AMPs on department or agency websites and performance reports against KPIs for culturally and linguistically diverse clients in department or agency annual reports.

6.2 Data: Department or agency to make culturally and linguistically diverse data available to other departments or agencies and the public.

	<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Target</i>
6.1	Publishing TEQSA will publish its AMP on the TEQSA website as part of its information publication scheme arrangements.	Director, Governance and Communications	July 2013	TEQSA's AMP published on website.
	TEQSA will report on its AMP in the Annual Report.	COO	October 2014 and October 2015	2013-14 and 2014-15 Annual Reports include report on TEQSA's AMP.
6.2	Data Not applicable. See 4.2.			