



# Renewal of course accreditation

## Report on renewal of accreditation of three higher education courses of study offered by Morling College Ltd

TEQSA has determined, under section 56 of the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Act 2011* (the TEQSA Act), to renew accreditation of the following higher education courses of study offered by Morling College Ltd (Morling) for a period of seven years from date of decision:

- ▶ **Master of Education (Leadership) (Coursework)**
- ▶ **Master of Education (Coursework)**
- ▶ **Graduate Diploma of Education**

TEQSA has, under subsection 53(1) of the TEQSA Act, imposed six conditions on the accreditation of the above courses of study.

**Condition 1:** That Morling:

- a) within 30 days of both parties renewing the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), provides TEQSA with a copy of the signed MOA with the National Institute of Christian Education (NICE);
- b) within 60 days of the notice of decision, provides TEQSA with a strategy and implementation plan detailing how Morling will centrally and effectively manage the requirement that Morling ensures that NICE complies with the Threshold Standards, including Provider Course Accreditation Standards (PCAS) 1.9, 1.10, 2.3, 2.4, and 5.4;
- c) within 12 months from the date of signing the MOA, ensures that its Academic Board completes a review of all aspects of Morling's third party delivery arrangements with NICE, including the terms of the MOA, including the extent to which:
  - i) there is consistency and accuracy between the course outlines, course materials and course guides available to all prospective and enrolled students at both Morling and NICE; and
  - ii) there is annual collection, monitoring and reporting to the Academic Board of attrition and completion rates across Morling and NICE
- d) within 15 months from the date of signing the MOA, Morling College must provide a copy of the annual review in 1) c), its recommendations and the recommendations accepted by the Academic Board to TEQSA.

**Condition 2:** That within 60 days of the notice of decision, Morling College provides a detailed implementation plan for the instructional design review of post graduate education courses, that includes a revised timeline to ensure all units of the three courses are reviewed by the end of 2015.

**Condition 3:** That within 30 days of completing the instructional design review of the courses, Morling report to TEQSA on the outcomes of the review, including actions taken to ensure equivalence of student learning outcomes across Morling and NICE online learning environments and Learning Management Systems.

**Condition 4:** That within 60 days of the notice of decision, Morling provides TEQSA with a framework on how it will obtain, monitor and act on comparative data in relation to the performance of students to include:

- a) the benchmarking methodology and indicators that it will use;
- b) the data likely to be the subject of benchmarking (including attrition, progression, course completion, grade distributions and other relevant comparative data); and
- c) how benchmarking outcomes will be reported and used for improvements across teaching and student learning outcomes.

**Condition 5:** That within 12 months of the notice of decision, Morling provides a report detailing its progress against the implementation of the framework in 4) and the outcomes of its benchmarking activities completed.

**Condition 6:** Within 12 months of offering the above courses Morling must provide a report, which has been considered by the Academic Board, on how the Education Course Review Committee systematically updates the courses, through internal revision and external reviews, including external review committee feedback and comparisons with standards at other higher education providers.

## Background to Decision

Morling submitted an application for renewal of accreditation of three courses of study under Part 4 of the TEQSA Act. Subsection 45(4) of the TEQSA Act requires a registered higher education provider who is not authorised to self-accredit the course of study to apply to TEQSA for accreditation. Subsection 56(4) enables TEQSA to renew accreditation of a course of study for a period not exceeding seven years.

## Main Reasons for the Decision

TEQSA has determined that the three higher education courses of study submitted by Morling for renewal of accreditation comply with the Provider Course Accreditation Standards. The course accreditation covers online delivery at all Australian sites and third party delivery by the National Institute of Christian Education.

TEQSA considers that the decision to apply conditions to Morling's application for renewal of accreditation of three courses of study is consistent with the basic principles for regulation in Part 2 of the TEQSA Act, as Morling is at risk of not complying with a number of the Threshold Standards. TEQSA considers that the risks of non-compliance with the Threshold Standards involve a number of matters that may affect Morling's capacity to manage and deliver its higher education awards.

- ▶ The broad issues which relate to the Master of Education (Leadership)(Coursework), Master of Education (Coursework) and Graduate Diploma of Education include:
  - a) managing and quality assuring third party arrangements, including to ensure consistent online delivery approaches and Learning Management Systems
  - b) internal and external course review processes, and
  - c) benchmarking of academic standards against similar accredited course processes.

In accordance with subsections 53(2) and 53(3) of the TEQSA Act, TEQSA may vary or revoke a condition imposed on the registration of a higher education provider, either on its own initiative or upon application by the provider for variation or revocation.

## Purpose of this report

The objects of the TEQSA Act (as listed at Section 3) include to:

- ▶ protect and enhance:
  - ▶ Australia's reputation for quality higher education and training services; and
  - ▶ Australia's international competitiveness in the higher education sector; and
  - ▶ excellence, diversity and innovation in higher education in Australia
- ▶ protect students undertaking, or proposing to undertake, higher education in Australia by requiring the provision of quality higher education
- ▶ ensure students undertaking, or proposing to undertake, higher education, have access to information relating to higher education in Australia.

Reports on TEQSA's determinations contribute to meeting these objects by making its regulatory decisions and actions publicly available. This report provides information about the applicant, the course accreditation process and the main reasons for TEQSA's decision.

## Background

TEQSA is Australia's regulatory and quality agency for higher education. TEQSA's primary aim is to ensure that students receive a high quality education at any Australian higher education provider. The TEQSA Act provides the legislative basis for TEQSA's powers and functions, which include: (a) registration and renewal of registration of higher education providers; and (b) accreditation of courses of study delivered by registered higher education providers without self-accrediting authority. TEQSA's regulatory decisions are made in accordance with relevant requirements of the:

1. TEQSA Act, available at: <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2011C00582>
2. Threshold Standards (as defined by the TEQSA Act), which include *the Provider Registration Standards, the Provider Category Standards, the Provider Course Accreditation Standards, and the Qualification Standards*, available at: <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2012L00003/Download>.

Section 13 of the TEQSA Act sets out three basic principles for regulation which TEQSA must comply with when exercising a power under the Act in relation to a regulated entity:

1. regulatory necessity
2. reflecting risk
3. proportionate regulation.

Section 196 of the TEQSA Act provides that TEQSA may disclose to the public higher education information that relates to anything done, or omitted to be done, under the Act. Paragraph 134(1)(e) gives TEQSA the function to "collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information relating to" higher education providers, awards, quality assurance practice and quality improvement in higher education and the Higher Education Standards Framework."

The main steps in TEQSA's course accreditation (AQF Qualification) process are summarised at **Attachment 1**.

# Attachment 1

## Summary of TEQSA's renewal of course accreditation process

### Submission of Application

- An application for renewal of a higher education course of study (AQF Qualification) must be in the approved form and accompanied by the required fee.



### Completeness Check

- Upon receipt of the application and required fee, TEQSA undertakes a completeness check of the application to ensure it is complete. TEQSA will notify the provider, normally within 30 days of receipt of the application, of requirements for any further information, documents or assistance.



### Substantive Assessment

- In accordance with Section 56(2) of the TEQSA Act, TEQSA undertakes a substantive assessment, which may include site visits to the provider's delivery locations and/or involvement of external experts. If an external expert is used, the applicant will be given an opportunity to identify potential conflicts of interest.
- TEQSA may request further information, documents and assistance during the substantive assessment process.



### Summary of findings

- Following the substantive assessment, if the findings recommend rejecting the application for renewal of accreditation, or approving it with conditions on accreditation, the provider will be sent a summary of findings and any relevant evidence not previously seen by the provider.
- The provider is given an opportunity to comment on the summary of findings before a decision is made on the application by TEQSA.



### Final Decision

- Within 30 days of TEQSA making a decision to grant or reject the renewal of accreditation application, the provider will be sent a notice of decision and a draft public report about the decision. The provider is given up to 28 days in which to provide feedback on the draft report. If the application is approved, the notification will include the period for which the course of study is renewed and any conditions, as applicable.
- Where an application has been rejected, or where conditions have been imposed on accreditation, the notification will be accompanied by a statement of reasons.



### Public Report and National Register update

- Where accreditation is granted, the provider's details will be updated on the National Register of Higher Education Providers in accordance with the National Register Guidelines. Any details about a decision to impose conditions will only be included at the end of the period for applying for review of the decision to impose conditions, or at the end of the review process.
- A public report on TEQSA's decision and the reasons for the decision will be published on the National Register following consideration of any feedback from the provider and, where relevant, at the conclusion of the period for applying for review of the decision.