Australian Government
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

TEQSA Corporate Plan

2026–30

Advancing together: Adapting regulation for a changing higher education sector

August 2026

TEQSA

Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, TEQSA acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

As Australia's higher education regulator, TEQSA recognises that the sharing of knowledge on this continent long predates Australia's higher education institutions and is committed to exercising its regulatory responsibilities with respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, knowledge and cultures.

TEQSA Corporate Plan 2026–30

Contacts

More information about the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, including electronic versions of this Corporate Plan, is available at teqsa.gov.au/about-us.

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Acknowledgements

This publication reflects the efforts of many people. Special thanks go to TEQSA staff involved in contributing and coordinating material.

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Introduction

As the accountable authority of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), we are pleased to present the TEQSA Corporate Plan 2026-30 which covers the 4 reporting periods from 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2030, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and s160(1) of the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011*.

Professor Kerri-Lee Krause
Chief Commissioner

Ms Adrienne Nieuwenhuis
Commissioner

Emeritus Professor Elizabeth More AM
Commissioner

Mr Stephen Somogyi
Commissioner

Commissioners' foreword

We are pleased to present TEQSA's Corporate Plan for 2026-30. This Plan prepares TEQSA for the financial year 2026-27 and subsequent years of 2027-28, 2028-29 and 2029-30.

This Plan was prepared at a time when Australia's higher education sector faces continued challenges and uncertainty shaped by changing student expectations, policy reform, technological disruption, pressures on student safety and wellbeing, threats to academic integrity, constrained resources, research security and heightened public debate. Alongside this, the Australian Universities Accord reform agenda continues to progress, including the permanent establishment of the Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC) on 29 April 2026 and the appointment of its Commissioners on 1 July 2026.

Simultaneously, university leadership and governance arrangements have come under increased public scrutiny, including governing body accountability and transparency, workplace law compliance, institutional culture and internal quality assurance. The final report of the Senate inquiry into the quality of governance at higher education providers, released in December 2025, made several recommendations regarding the appropriateness of TEQSA's powers to bolster accountability and transparency across the sector.

On 13 July 2026, the Australian Government amended the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* to strengthen requirements relating to provider governance and the prevention of, and response to, racism, including antisemitism, Islamophobia and racism affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. These requirements will commence progressively during 2027. The Government is also progressing work to provide TEQSA with additional powers and tools to support efficient and effective regulation, including TEQSA's capacity to respond more rapidly to systemic risks.

While the higher education landscape and TEQSA's regulatory environment continue to evolve, our purpose, to protect and enhance the integrity, quality and reputation of Australian higher education, remains constant. By performing our role effectively, TEQSA delivers public value: protecting students, strengthening confidence in Australian qualifications, and supporting a higher education sector that contributes to Australia's social and economic prosperity. To deliver on our purpose and meet the challenges presented by emerging risks and sector transformation, we recognise that we must adapt to an increasingly complex and diverse landscape.

As the sector continues to evolve, TEQSA has set a clear path forward. Our priority is to mature our regulatory approach and uplift our capability to deliver risk-based, proportionate and responsive regulation, while supporting providers to manage risk and develop mature self-assurance over time.

Our Corporate Plan, *Advancing together: Adapting regulation for a changing higher education sector*, builds on our previous commitments to mature our regulatory model and develop our workforce. It seeks to support students through safe, high-quality tertiary education while supporting providers through this period of transformation.

In the year ahead, TEQSA's work will focus on 3 areas of regulatory focus – assure, develop and review.

Assure

- effective governance arrangements across Australian higher education providers.
- providers' implementation of requirements to prevent and respond to racism, including antisemitism, Islamophobia and racism affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- the quality of transnational education delivered by Australian higher education providers.
- effective collaboration with the Department of Education, the Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC), the National Student Ombudsman (NSO), the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) and other government partners.
- Australia's reputation for quality higher education.

Develop

- a modernised, risk-based regulatory approach to ensure that TEQSA utilises our powers to achieve our regulatory objectives.
- and implement the Regulatory Risk Framework to help providers clearly understand the risks TEQSA considers important, how they align with the Threshold Standards, and how they can best monitor and assure themselves that those risks are being effectively managed.
- relevant guidance and information to support good practice and provider self-assurance.

Review

- our approach to cost recovery to ensure it is appropriate and equitable.

The delivery of these priorities will be underpinned by the following principles:

- Minimising regulatory burden on higher education providers by incorporating or acknowledging the outcomes of other legislative obligations and requirements.
- Ensuring activities are informed by an understanding of student concerns.
- Supporting students to access appropriate pathways to resolve individual disputes or concerns and, where appropriate, responding to provider-level issues.
- Utilising data to monitor provider performance, provider risk, and current and emerging sector-wide risks.

In our role as the Commission and TEQSA's accountable authority, we will continue to ensure that the agency, led by the Chief Executive Officer, Dr Mary Russell, and her executive leadership team, is delivering TEQSA's legislated functions and strategic objectives. This includes our commitment to promoting good practice, remaining alert to emerging trends and risks, and ensuring compliance with the Threshold Standards.

We look forward to working closely with our colleagues across Government and stakeholders in the sector as we support providers, students and staff through this period of change and continue to enhance the integrity, quality and reputation of Australian higher education for the benefit of all Australians.

Professor Kerri-Lee Krause
Chief Commissioner

Ms Adrienne Nieuwenhuis
Commissioner

Emeritus Professor Elizabeth More AM
Commissioner

Mr Stephen Somogyi
Commissioner

ADVANCING TOGETHER: Adapting regulation for a changing higher education sector (2026–30)

OUR VISION

Public confidence in the excellence of Australian higher education

OUR PURPOSE

We protect and enhance the integrity, quality and reputation of Australian higher education

OBJECTIVES

Through these objectives, TEQSA delivers public value by strengthening confidence in Australian higher education, protecting students and supporting providers to meet the Threshold Standards.

1 Promote and support good practice and effective self-assurance across the sector

- Develop and publish relevant guidance and information in consultation with the sector, to support good practice and provider self-assurance.
- Engage with higher education peak bodies, registered providers, and students, to uphold student interests and support effective regulation and quality assurance.
- Work closely with the Department of Education and the Higher Education Standards Committee (formerly the Higher Education Standards Panel) on joint projects regarding the Threshold Standards.
- Advise and make recommendations to the Minister on matters relating to the quality and regulation of higher education providers.

2 Identify, analyse, and respond to risks to the sector

- Monitor the performance of registered providers, identify risks, assess provider responses and where necessary, take regulatory or other action.
- Maintain a risk assessment focus on the financial viability of providers, particularly in relation to providers heavily reliant on overseas students.
- Develop TEQSA's risk and compliance focus in relation to student wellbeing, such as mental health and the issues raised by sexual assault and sexual harassment.
- Further develop the activity of the TEQSA Higher Education Integrity Unit in relation to commercial academic cheating, cyber security and foreign interference.

3 Ensure compliance with applicable legislation through effective and efficient regulation

- Review and adapt TEQSA's regulatory practice, in keeping with established principles of regulatory best practice and reform, and in consultation with stakeholders.
- Ensure alignment of TEQSA's risk and compliance approach with legislated requirements and principles of regulatory necessity, risk and proportionality.
- Further improve TEQSA's regulatory assessments to ensure they are risk aligned, streamlined and strengthen efficiency.
- Recover regulatory costs consistent with the Cost Recovery Implementation Statement and the Government's cost recovery requirements.
- Implement key strategic projects in relation to organisational capability.

MAKING IT HAPPEN

> Apply a consistent, risk-based and evidence-informed approach to regulation.
> Strengthen our analytics and digital capability to support regulatory decision-making.
> Deliver timely, principles-based guidance and engagement to support provider implementation and self-assurance.
> Invest in our people, their capability and regulatory expertise.
> Engage collaboratively with students, providers, peak bodies and government partners.
> Continuously improve our regulatory practices and organisational capability.
> Foster a values-driven, professional regulatory culture that support consistent, fair and transparent decision-making.

Our operating environment

Our operating environment

Australian Universities Accord

The Australian Government has committed to the reform agenda of the Australian Universities Accord (the Accord), which seeks to deliver lasting and transformative reform across Australia's higher education system. The Accord reforms are focused on improving the quality, accessibility, affordability and sustainability of higher education, to support Australia's long-term social and economic prosperity.

Central to the reform agenda is the Government's target for 80% of the working-age population to hold a tertiary qualification by 2050.

At a glance

1.6 million
higher education students (2024)

497,139
international students (Year to Date May 2026) (HE+ELICOS)

219
registered higher education providers (July 2026)

Achieving this ambition will require stronger pathways between vocational education and training (VET) and higher education, improvements in rates of student participation and success, and reforms to higher education policy, funding and governance.

Key reforms arising from the Accord include the establishment of the National Student Ombudsman (NSO) in February 2025 and the Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC), whose statutory Commissioners commenced in July 2026.

These reforms are reshaping Australia's higher education policy landscape and the institutional arrangement that support the sector, creating a changing operating environment for providers and the national regulatory system.

International education

International education remains one of Australia's most significant national assets, contributing to economic prosperity, research capability, international engagement and future workforce development.

Maintaining the quality, integrity and sustainability of the sector remains a key Government priority. Recent reforms seek to strengthen the integrity of Australia's international education system while supporting sustainable growth.

These reforms respond to risks associated with student recruitment practices, education agent conduct, provider governance and changing patterns of international student mobility. At the same time, Australian higher education providers continue to expand transnational education and offshore delivery arrangements, creating new opportunities while increasing regulatory complexity.

Legislative reforms introduced during 2026 strengthen the regulatory framework for international education, including offshore delivery, education agent practices and international student recruitment. Together with continued growth in transnational education, these reforms create an evolving regulatory environment for providers and regulators.

Student safety and wellbeing

Student safety and wellbeing remain central to the quality of the higher education experience and continue to be a key focus of Government, providers and the broader community. The Australian Universities Accord, the establishment of the National Student Ombudsman, and ongoing public attention to student experiences have reinforced expectations that providers foster safe, inclusive and supportive learning environments.

The higher education sector also continues to respond to concerns relating to racism and social cohesion in Australia, particularly within Australian universities. Amendments to the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* strengthen provider responsibilities for preventing, and responding to racism, including antisemitism, Islamophobia and racism affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Strengthening corporate and academic governance

Strong corporate and academic governance in higher education providers is fundamental to protecting the quality, integrity and reputation of Australian higher education. Governing bodies of providers play a critical role in providing strategic direction, overseeing organisational performance and ensuring providers meet their obligations to students and the wider community.

Recent public scrutiny, including the Senate inquiry into the Quality of Governance at Higher Education Providers and the work of the Expert Council on University Governance, has reinforced the need for effective governance arrangements across the sector. Expectations of governing bodies continue to evolve, with increasing emphasis on governance arrangements that are transparent, accountable and capable of identifying and managing strategic, academic, financial, cultural and operational risks.

It remains critical that governing bodies continue to reflect deeply and objectively on their performance and proactively identify and address areas of heightened risk in a timely manner. Equally, governing bodies should continue to identify opportunities to further develop and enhance governance maturity to ensure they remain consistent with best exemplars of contemporary good practice.

TEQSA will continue to promote governance maturity across the sector through proportionate regulation, guidance and engagement, recognising that effective governance underpins provider self-assurance and public confidence in Australian higher education.

Tertiary harmonisation

The Australian Government's response to the Australian Universities Accord places greater emphasis on a more connected tertiary education system. Strengthening pathways between vocational education and training (VET) and higher education is expected to improve student mobility, support lifelong learning and better align tertiary education with Australia's future workforce needs.

As the tertiary education system becomes increasingly interconnected, there is growing importance in ensuring regulatory approaches are appropriately aligned across sectors while recognising their distinct legislative and regulatory frameworks.

TEQSA and ASQA will continue to work collaboratively to support greater regulatory harmonisation and reduce unnecessary regulatory burden for dual sector providers.

Sector integrity and academic quality

Rapid advances in technology, increasing geopolitical complexity, emerging research security considerations and the growing sophistication of commercial services that facilitate academic misconduct continue to reshape the risk environment for Australia's higher education sector.

Generative artificial intelligence, commercial academic cheating services, file-sharing platforms, cheating technologies, such as wearables and other emerging digital tools, are changing how providers approach assessment design, academic integrity, research quality and assurance of learning outcomes and student success.

Maintaining confidence in Australian higher education requires providers to ensure graduates have achieved the learning outcomes expected of their qualifications and that research is conducted with integrity, appropriate security and responsible governance. These risks differ across higher education providers, disciplines, modes of delivery and research contexts, reinforcing the importance of proportionate, risk-based approaches tailored to each provider's context and supported by mature institutional self-assurance.

TEQSA will continue to work collaboratively with the sector to strengthen academic and research integrity through guidance, engagement and the sharing of good practice. TEQSA will continue to monitor integrity risks, using regulatory intelligence to inform a proportionate and evidence-informed response that protects students, supports providers to strengthen and mature self-assurance, and maintains confidence in the integrity of Australian awards.

TEQSA will increasingly focus on sector compliance approaches to assure providers' responses to these risks, in particular to uphold award integrity.

Cyber security and information governance

As higher education providers become increasingly reliant on digital technologies, cloud-based services and interconnected research and learning environments, cyber security and information governance remain important considerations across the sector. Increasing cyber threats, evolving technologies and growing volumes of institutional, research and student information continue to shape the operating environment for providers.

Effective governance, risk management and information security practices are essential to protecting institutional operations, safeguarding sensitive information and maintaining confidence in Australia's higher education system.

Provider financial and operational resilience

The Australian higher education sector demonstrated considerable resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, financial and operational pressures continue to evolve, driven by changing operating conditions, increasing costs, workforce challenges, an uncertain geopolitical environment and shifts in student demand.

While many providers remain financially strong, others continue to experience pressures associated with changing patterns of international student enrolment, migration policy settings, rising operating costs and ongoing structural deficits, particularly among smaller providers.

Financial and operational resilience remain closely linked to effective governance, strategic planning, organisational change management and enterprise risk management. The increasing complexity of the operating environment reinforces the importance of effective governance, informed decision-making and long-term institutional sustainability.

Financial and operational resilience will continue to be a key focus of TEQSA's ongoing work on governance across the sector, with particular focus on universities.

Our regulatory direction

This section outlines TEQSA's regulatory direction over the life of this Corporate Plan. It signals the progressive implementation of a more transparent, proportionate and risk-based regulatory approach, beginning with the Regulatory Risk Framework and supporting providers to better understand regulatory expectations and strengthen mature self-assurance.

Australia's tertiary education sector continues to evolve in response to changing student expectations, technological advancements, legislative reforms and heightened public expectations of quality, governance and accountability. To remain effective, regulation must evolve alongside the sector.

Over the life of this Corporate Plan, TEQSA will continue to strengthen our regulatory approach to ensure it remains transparent, proportionate, risk-based, data-informed and fit-for-purpose. This reflects our commitment to protecting students and maintaining public confidence while reducing unnecessary regulatory burden for providers that demonstrate mature governance and effective self-assurance.

A key step in this evolution is the implementation of TEQSA's Regulatory Risk Framework. The framework will strengthen the consistency and transparency of regulatory decision-making by providing a common approach to identifying and assessing regulatory risk, while supporting providers to better understand TEQSA's regulatory expectations.

The Regulatory Risk Framework represents the first pillar of TEQSA's broader regulatory strategy which will continue to develop over the life of this Corporate Plan. Together, these initiatives will support a more contemporary regulatory approach that enables TEQSA to focus our regulatory effort where risks to students, quality and the integrity of Australian higher education are greatest.

While undertaking this work, TEQSA will continue our work to streamline and simplify our regulatory processes, and to differentiate requirements of providers according to risk and complexity. We will continue to reduce regulatory burden wherever possible.

Objectives, key activities and performance

Objectives, key activities and performance

The objectives, activities and performance measures in this Corporate Plan set out how TEQSA will deliver our purpose over the next 4 years.

Together, they support the continued evolution of TEQSA's regulatory approach – strengthening transparency, consistency and proportionate, risk-based regulation, while also supporting the strengthening of provider self-assurance and protecting students' interests.

Over the life of this Corporate Plan, TEQSA will continue to strengthen our regulatory capability by:

- implementing the Regulatory Risk Framework as the first pillar of TEQSA's evolving regulatory strategy
- strengthening regulatory intelligence through improved data, analytics, digital capability and continued engagement with students, providers, peak bodies and the broader sector
- investing in our people, regulatory expertise and organisational capability
- continually improving our regulatory approach to ensure we remain transparent, proportionate and fit-for-purpose.

Alignment with Portfolio Budget Statement and Regulator Performance Resource Management Guide

TEQSA's Portfolio Budget Statement Outcome (Outcome 1) is to contribute to a high-quality tertiary education sector through:

- streamlined and nationally consistent higher education regulatory arrangements
- registration of higher education providers
- accreditation of higher education courses
- investigation, quality assurance and dissemination of higher education standards and performance.

TEQSA's 3 strategic objectives align with the performance criteria set out in the 2026-27 Portfolio Budget Statements. For each objective, this Corporate Plan identifies the key activities, performance measures and expected results that will guide delivery and demonstrate performance.

As TEQSA's regulatory strategy continues to develop over the life of this Corporate Plan, our performance framework will also continue to evolve to ensure it remains aligned with our strategic direction and the outcomes we seek to achieve.

TEQSA's performance framework is also aligned with the Australian Government Regulator Performance Guide (RMG 128), supporting continuous improvement, risk-based and data-informed regulation, collaboration and engagement, and the delivery of trusted, effective regulation.

OBJECTIVE 1

Promote and support good practice and effective self-assurance across the sector

TEQSA will continue to promote good practice and strengthen provider self-assurance, recognising providers as the first line of responsibility for assuring the quality and integrity of Australian higher education.

We will continue to provide guidance, engagement activities, digital resources and opportunities for sector collaboration to support providers in understanding and meeting their obligations under the Threshold Standards.

By supporting providers to strengthen their own governance, risk management and quality assurance practices, TEQSA seeks to reduce unnecessary regulatory administration while maintaining confidence in the quality and integrity of Australian higher education.

The Regulatory Risk Framework will support providers to better understand TEQSA's regulatory expectations, strengthen mature self-assurance and implement effective approaches to identifying, managing and assuring risks that align with the Threshold Standards.

TEQSA will continue to:

> implement and actively encourage provider self-assurance into our regulatory approach, supporting providers to strengthen internal governance, reflect on their performance and continuously improve their quality assurance practices

> engage with providers, students and other stakeholders through guidance, consultation and ongoing dialogue, providing greater clarity about regulatory expectations and supporting continuous improvement across the sector

> work collaboratively with government agencies and sector partners, including the Department of Education, ASQA, the NSO and the ATEC, to support implementation of government reforms and strengthen quality, integrity and governance across Australia's tertiary education system.

Key activities	Performance measure	Target
1.1 Develop and publish education and guidance materials, in consultation with the sector, to support good practice and provider self-assurance	Number of website visits to TEQSA-developed resources	10% increase in website visits to TEQSA-developed education and guidance materials compared to previous year
	Website-based guidance is current and relevant to providers	Publication of 3-4 sector guidance notes or resource packs annually 100% of the website pages visited most frequently (top 30% visits) have been reviewed and (if required) updated within the last 12 months
	Extent of stakeholder satisfaction with TEQSA-developed resources	Peak bodies and providers report substantive contribution to TEQSA's good practice materials and guidance
1.2 Engage with higher education peak bodies, registered providers and students, to uphold student interests and support effective regulation and quality assurance	Extent of satisfaction with TEQSA's engagement with peak bodies and providers, including in relation to:	Peak bodies and providers generally report constructive and effective engagement with TEQSA
	i. sector trends, risks and challenges	Peak bodies and providers report substantive contribution to TEQSA's identification and response of sector trends and risks
	ii. applications for registration and accreditation	Peak bodies and providers report substantive contribution to reformed TEQSA regulatory model and practice
	iii. implementation of cost recovery	Peak bodies register satisfaction with engagement on, and further development of, the cost recovery model

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Key activities *(continued)*	Performance measure	Target
	iv. the annual conference and other events	80% of stakeholders are satisfied as per conference survey, webinar feedback and provider survey results Increase of student attendance at the conference compared to previous years
	Engage high-risk providers in free online events to promote and support good practice	TEQSA delivers provider engagement activities aligned to identified sector risk themes by delivering at least 3 online events annually, and reports on participation data for each activity
	Number of visits to the *Students* section of TEQSA's website	10% year-on-year increase of website visits to the *Students* section of the TEQSA website compared to previous years
1.3 Work closely with the Department of Education and the Higher Education Standards Committee (formerly the Higher Education Standards Panel) on joint projects regarding the HES Framework	Participation and substantive contribution to joint projects	TEQSA annually participates and substantively contributes to at least 3 joint projects aligned with the HES Framework
1.4 Advise and make recommendations to the Minister on matters relating to the quality and regulation of higher education providers	Provide advice to the Minister regarding key trends, risks and issues across the sector and high-risk providers	Provide advice and recommendations for 4-5 policy initiatives relevant to key trends, risks and issues across the sector

OBJECTIVE 2

Identify, analyse and respond to risks to the sector

The higher education regulatory environment is constantly evolving. New business models are emerging, and technologies are being developed and deployed, bringing opportunities but also risks to integrity. Alongside these changes, risks associated with academic cheating services, cyber security, education agent conduct and outsourcing arrangements continue to evolve. These new and evolving risks to integrity are reshaping the higher education landscape and our response.

TEQSA will continue to strengthen our regulatory intelligence and capability to identify, analyse and respond proportionately to emerging risks, and enhance the effectiveness of our risk-based regulatory approach. During the life of this Corporate Plan, TEQSA will finalise and implement the Regulatory Risk Framework, as the first pillar of our evolving regulatory strategy, strengthening the consistency, transparency and effectiveness of risk-based regulation.

As part of our work to address risks and ensure compliance, TEQSA's key regulatory priorities include:

- student and staff safety and wellbeing
- corporate and academic governance
- sector integrity and academic quality
- provider information security
- provider financial sustainability.

TEQSA will continue to strengthen our capability to anticipate and respond to emerging risks, particularly those affecting equity, access, student safety and educational outcomes.

TEQSA will continue to collaborate with Australian and international regulators and quality assurance agencies to share intelligence, build regulatory capability and respond to emerging issues affecting higher education quality and integrity. This includes participation in initiatives such as the Global Academic Integrity Network, to share information with the international quality assurance community about risks posed by, and responses to, commercial academic cheating services and evolving generative artificial intelligence technologies, as well as the Southeast Asia and Australia Government to Government (SEAG2G) program, to develop deeper institutional partnerships between regulatory authorities in Australia and Southeast Asia.

Key activities	Performance measure	Target
2.1 Monitor the performance of registered providers, identify risks, assess provider responses and, where necessary, take regulatory or other action	Complete and report on the annual risk assessment of providers and share key themes with the sector	Publish TEQSA's annual Compliance Report by 30 March, and Annual Report by 30 September
	TEQSA's sector risk monitoring activity contributes to the setting of its risk priorities and is shared with the sector – emphasising opportunities for improvement	Complete 2 annual sector risk monitoring or compliance activities
		Findings of the annual sector risk monitoring activities are shared with the sector in written and seminar format by the end of financial year
2.2 Maintain a risk assessment focus on the financial viability of providers, particularly in relation to providers heavily reliant on overseas students	Assess provider financial risk as part of the annual risk assessments	Financial risk assessment will be completed for providers who have been in operation for >3 years, as part of annual risk assessment
2.3 Develop TEQSA's risk and compliance focus in relation to student wellbeing, such as mental health and the issues raised by sexual assault and sexual harassment	Sector compliance activity involving student wellbeing	TEQSA's annual Compliance Plan will be modified each year to target relevant priority issues
2.4 Further develop the activity of the TEQSA Higher Education Integrity Unit in relation to commercial academic cheating, cyber security and foreign interference	Demonstrated improvements in sector awareness, identification, analysis and response to integrity risk	At least 70% of providers give a positive rating for TEQSA's performance in 'Helping the sector as a whole to manage risks' TEQSA delivers at least 3 targeted resources or initiatives annually to support higher education providers in managing integrity risks

OBJECTIVE 3
Ensure compliance with applicable legislation through effective and efficient regulation

Through effective and efficient regulation, TEQSA supports higher education providers to comply with applicable legislation, protecting students' interests and maintaining public confidence in the quality, integrity and reputation of Australian higher education.

TEQSA will continue to regulate in a way that is transparent, proportionate and risk-based, recognising that providers are responsible for assuring the quality of their own operations while TEQSA provides independent oversight, in the public interest.

Over the life of this Corporate Plan, TEQSA will continue to refine our regulatory model and practices to ensure they remain fit-for-purpose in a changing higher education environment. This includes embedding the Regulatory Risk Framework into regulatory practice, strengthening consistency and transparency in regulatory decision-making and supporting more efficient, evidence-informed regulation.

TEQSA will continue to streamline regulatory assessments, improve digital systems, strengthen organisational capability and enhance our data and analytics to improve regulatory effectiveness and reduce unnecessary administrative burden where appropriate. These improvements will enable TEQSA to focus regulatory effort where risks to students, quality and the integrity of the sector are greatest.

Through ongoing engagement with providers, students, government and other stakeholders, TEQSA will continue to evolve our regulatory practice, ensuring it remains responsive to legislative reform, emerging risks and changing community expectations.

	Key activities	Performance measure	Target
3.1	Review and adapt TEQSA's regulatory model and practice, in keeping with established principles of regulatory best practice and reform, in close consultation with stakeholders	Stakeholder acceptance of process and outcomes for regulatory reform	Revised regulatory model and practice accepted by range of stakeholders as effective and reflective of modern regulatory practice, in particular by encouraging and facilitating sector innovation
3.2	Align risk and compliance approach with legislated requirements and principles of regulatory necessity, risk and proportionality	Proportion of compliance assessments undertaken to address non-compliance and restore compliance (registered and non-registered) providers	90% of compliance assessments conclude with provider compliance (by regulatory action, provider education, court or tribunal order)
		TEQSA reviews cases in which its decisions are externally reviewed, identifies any opportunities for improvement in TEQSA's regulatory approach and implements improvements	TEQSA's Annual Report includes details of improvement opportunities and the steps taken by TEQSA to implement identified improvements
		Extent to which TEQSA meets relevant legislated and/or statutory freedom of information, privacy or information security obligations	100% compliance and no adverse findings with respect to relevant obligations, requirements or requests
3.3	Ensure regulatory assessments are streamlined and coordinated to ensure regulatory activity is undertaken efficiently	Yearly trend in processing times	Median assessment times within legislative deadline in the TEQSA Act
		Percentage of providers satisfied TEQSA is reducing administrative burden	More than 75% of providers give a positive rating to the statement 'usefulness of advice and support in relation to the appropriate reduction of regulatory administration'

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Key activities *(continued)*	Performance measure	Target
	Percentage of assessments completed within legislative deadlines as required under the TEQSA Act	90% of registration and courses assessments are concluded within legislated timeframes, and 10% concluded within the extension period where this relates to issues outside TEQSA's control
3.4 Recover regulatory costs consistent with Cost Recovery Implementation Statement (CRIS) and relevant framework or guidelines	Recovery consistent with approved CRIS and with support of providers	CRIS is amended through annual consultation, and changes are published on the TEQSA website 70% provider ratings in annual survey rate the process as transparent and information or consultation as good
3.5 Implement key strategic projects in relation to organisational capability	Strategic projects are progressively implemented, on time and on budget	TEQSA's new regulatory case management system, TEQcore, is implemented in accordance with the approved roadmap TEQSA develops and publishes its key regulatory priorities by 30 June each year, with key milestones achieved as planned

Oversight and management of enterprise risk

TEQSA seeks to empower our staff to identify, engage with and manage risk to support the achievement of our strategic priorities.

Our approach to enterprise risk management occurs through:

- a risk management framework that sets out an agreed definition of risk across the agency, a process on how to consistently identify, assess and manage enterprise risks, and an overarching risk appetite and tolerance statement that underpins TEQSA's aligned approach in the management of enterprise risks, security risks, workplace health and safety, and project risks
- the enterprise risk register, which categorises key risks and is summarised below
- quarterly reviews of each enterprise risk that are reported to TEQSA's accountable authority and the audit and risk committee by the responsible risk owners.

TEQSA's key enterprise risks associated with our priority activities for 2026-27 are:

- ineffective and inefficient processes for registration and course accreditation
- failure to proactively identify or effectively manage acute compliance risks or sectoral risks
- inadequate governance, planning or management of people, resources or technology
- failure to build or sustain a positive culture which supports integrity.

We will manage these risks by:

- reviewing and adapting our regulatory strategy, including our approach to registration, course accreditation and the assessment of compliance, to align with sector-wide and individual provider risk
- investing in technology platforms and systems to enable us to deliver our core regulatory functions effectively and efficiently
- enhancing our workforce capability and improving our enabling processes, to develop and maintain a sustainable basis for our regulatory practice and organisational resilience
- continuing to review our organisational culture and policy frameworks to support the security and integrity of our work.

Capability

Our values

As a regulator committed to ongoing improvement and building trust in our regulatory settings, TEQSA continues to embed our values to support our strategic objectives.

Our values reflect the APS Values and Code of Conduct and, in practice, create a positive culture in which we can perform efficiently and effectively.

TEQSA's values shape how we approach our work. In practice, they:

- support us in achieving our purpose as a regulator
- clarify our mindset and motivations
- guide how we operate
- help ensure we are doing the right things in the right way
- describe what the regulated community can expect of us
- describe how we operate to our stakeholders.

Together, these values underpin our culture and provide the foundation for best practice and help ensure we are well-positioned to serve the Australian community.

Trust

We have confidence in each other to do our best. We encourage open and honest conversations that focus on the issue not the person. We promote a supportive and safe workplace environment.

Respect

We approach every situation with kindness, compassion and an open mindset. We value people, the range of views and experience they bring and the work they undertake.

Accountability

We hold ourselves and each other accountable for our actions, how we work together and the quality of what we deliver. We gather feedback, reflect and act on opportunities for improvement.

Collaboration

We draw on our collective strength by encouraging each other to contribute to the achievement of shared objectives. We provide context and information to help others succeed.

Through our people, data, digital and cyber we ensure our capabilities can deliver on our responsibilities and purpose. Underpinning our corporate functions are our strategies for people, technologies and systems, stakeholder engagement and collaboration.

People

TEQSA supports and develops our people to deliver our purpose and be an employer of choice. Our staff are valued and we strive for a safe, positive and inclusive workplace that encourages productivity, engagement and innovation.

We have a skilled, dedicated and passionate workforce with expertise in higher education, quality assurance, regulation and public sector administration. We continue to invest in developing and aligning the capabilities needed to support and respond to a changing operating environment and deliver quality regulatory and organisational outcomes.

TEQSA has organisational plans setting out actions and strategies for:

- attracting, retaining and effectively managing a required level of suitably qualified, skilled and experienced staff, including targeted recruitment that supports innovation, and strengthens leadership and organisational resilience
- equipping staff with transferable skills through capability development and collaboration opportunities
- supporting staff health, wellbeing and psychological safety
- recognising and rewarding contributions
- ensuring an inclusive workplace that recognises and values the diversity of our employees, including through flexible work arrangements.

Data, digital and cyber

We recognise the crucial role of data, digital technologies and cyber in achieving our strategic objectives and delivering efficient and trusted services.

Our Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and cyber security strategy will support the delivery of TEQSA's purpose by enabling contemporary approaches to collecting and analysing regulatory intelligence and improving our responsiveness to sector risks. To achieve this, we will leverage modern and merging technologies, including generative artificial intelligence while continuing to strengthen our data, digital and cyber capabilities.

In the coming years we will focus on:

- keeping our digital and data assets secure, reliable and available to support timely and effective regulation, and maintain public trust
- upgrading our provider information management system to manage our regulatory functions, from initial application submissions through to ongoing monitoring and compliance. The system will streamline processes, enhance data analytics capabilities and support more efficient, consistent and evidence-informed regulatory decision-making, while meeting whole-of-government information security requirements
- enhancing our analytics, business intelligence and generative artificial intelligence capabilities to strengthen data-informed decision-making, regulatory intelligence, improve productivity and enhance service delivery
- reducing our dependency on legacy platforms by transitioning to a secure, reliable and fit-for-purpose technology ecosystem.

Engagement and collaboration

We recognise that effective engagement, communication and collaboration are fundamental to contemporary regulation. By working closely with students, providers, government, other agencies, peak bodies and other sector stakeholders, we strengthen our understanding of emerging sector issues, support strengthening provider self-assurance and ensure our regulatory approaches remain responsive, timely, proportionate and evidence-based.

TEQSA engages with stakeholders through public consultations, roundtables, workshops, webinars, an annual conference and other forums and communication channels to share information, gather insights and inform regulatory practice. We work closely with the Department of Education, the NSO, the ATEC, peak bodies, students and industry to understand emerging challenges and opportunities across the tertiary education sector.

Our Student Advisory Panel ensures student perspectives inform our work and contribute to the continuous improvement of Australia's higher education system.

We actively seek feedback from providers, students and stakeholders through our annual survey and other engagement activities. We use these insights to continuously improve our regulatory practice, guidance and delivery of our services.

Stakeholder insights complement regulatory intelligence and data to support informed decision-making and identify emerging risks.

TEQSA will continue to strengthen partnerships across the tertiary education sector, recognising that effective regulation is supported by open dialogue, shared understanding and a collective commitment to quality, integrity and continuous improvement. Through these partnerships, we will continue to support strengthening provider self-assurance and deliver better outcomes for students, providers and the Australian community.

Our stakeholders

TEQSA works with a diverse network of domestic and international higher education stakeholders whose expertise, perspectives and collaboration support effective, proportionate and evidence-informed regulation. These relationships strengthen our understanding of the tertiary education sector and contribute to better outcomes for students, providers and the Australian community.

Higher education providers

TEQSA will continue to work with and regulate higher education providers across the Australian tertiary education sector including Australian Universities both public and private, Institutes of Higher Education, University Colleges, and Australian branches of overseas universities and other higher education providers.

Students

TEQSA continues to strengthen student participation in our work through the Student Advisory Panel and engagement with student representative organisations. These perspectives help inform our understanding of risks to student interests and support continuous improvement in our regulatory practice.

Parliament and Executive

TEQSA is accountable to the Australian Parliament through the Minister for Education and parliamentary oversight processes, including Senate Estimates. As an independent statutory authority, TEQSA works closely with the Department of Education while maintaining our regulatory independence.

Department of Education

TEQSA works closely with the Department of Education to support implementation of higher education policy, share regulatory insights and contribute specialist advice on matters affecting the sector.

Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC)

TEQSA works closely with the ATEC to support implementation of the Accord reforms and promote a coherent, joined-up approach across Australia's tertiary education systems.

National Student Ombudsman (NSO)

TEQSA collaborates with the NSO through information sharing, referral arrangements and initiatives that promote good practice across the sector.

Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)

TEQSA will continue to collaborate with ASQA to support the Accord's reform focus on achieving greater harmonisation between the VET and higher education sectors.

Whole-of-government partnerships

TEQSA works collaboratively with Commonwealth agencies to share intelligence, identify emerging risks and support the integrity and sustainability of Australia's international education sector.

Provider peak bodies

TEQSA will continue to work closely with provider peak bodies as part of our partnership approach with the sector, particularly in relation to the regulatory framework and TEQSA's performance. Provider peak bodies provide valuable insight into sector experiences, emerging issues and opportunities to improve regulatory practices.

Professional accreditation bodies

TEQSA and industry professional accreditation bodies with links to the higher education sector have a mutual interest in maintaining and supporting quality assurance of the provision of Australian higher education. TEQSA's agreements with industry bodies facilitate the sharing of information and seek to reduce regulatory burden on higher education providers through joint and streamlined approaches to assessment, as well as highlighting emerging risks.

Other stakeholders

TEQSA recognises that effective regulation is strengthened through ongoing dialogue with stakeholders across the higher education sector. These relationships help us identify emerging risks and issues, build shared understanding, support the strengthening of provider self-assurance and continuously improve our regulatory practice.

Appendix A: Table of revisions for 2026-27 Corporate Plan

The following table summarises revisions made to selected performance measure targets in TEQSA's Corporate Plan 2025–29, effective for 2026–27.

Corporate Plan information	Performance target/s from TEQSA's Corporate Plan 2025–29	Change	Performance target revisions in TEQSA's Corporate Plan 2026–30	Rationale for changes
Objective 1 > Key activity 1.3 > Measure 9	10% year-on-year increase in participation of high-risk providers in online provider information events.	Amended	TEQSA delivers provider engagement activities aligned to identified sector risk themes by offering at least 3 online events annually, and reports the participation data for each activity.	The original target requires TEQSA to measure attendance by 'high-risk' providers. This is not feasible because TEQSA does not currently differentiate between different provider risk profiles. Instead, TEQSA identifies and responds to sector risks through thematic and sector-wide risk assessments, rather than categorising individual providers as high-risk or not.
Objective 2 > Key activity 2.4 > Measure 17	> Additional prosecutions under section 114 of the TEQSA Act. > 90% of websites advertising or offering commercial academic cheating services blocked. > Ongoing program of work to remove posts and accounts from social media, with a target of at least 500 removals per financial year. > 80% of providers have had at least one staff member complete the *Masterclass in deterring and detecting commercial academic cheating.* > Comprehensive suite of resources delivered to Institutes of Higher Education to support enhanced cyber security awareness and maturity.	Amended	> At least 70% of providers give a positive rating for TEQSA's performance in 'Helping the sector as a whole to manage risks'. > TEQSA delivers at least 3 targeted resources or initiatives annually to support higher education providers in managing integrity risks.	The majority of the original targets do not address the measure and are overly output-based rather than outcome-focused. Some targets are not supported by available data (the total population of cheating websites cannot be quantified). The 500 social media removals/year target exceeds the ~300 typically identified, and the Masterclass target reflects an activity launched several years ago that no longer provides useful information.

Corporate Plan information	Performance target/s from TEQSA's Corporate Plan 2025–29	Change	Performance target revisions in TEQSA's Corporate Plan 2026–30	Rationale for changes
Objective 3 > Key activity 3.3 > Measure 23	In 2025, a 30% increase in positive ratings from providers for 'regulation by TEQSA does not necessarily impede efficient operation of higher education providers' in the stakeholder survey	Amended	More than 75% of providers give a positive rating to the statement 'usefulness of advice and support in relation to the reduction of regulatory administration'.	The original target required a 30% increase in positive ratings. This target was designed with a one-year timeframe in mind and was not sustainable long-term.
Objective 3 > Key activity 3.4 > Measure 25	> Full implementation of CRIS, as amended through annual consultation framework. > 70% provider ratings in annual survey rate the process as transparent and information or consultation as good. > TEQSA systems mature and efficient	Amended (Target 1) Retained (Target 2) Removed (Target 3)	> CRIS is amended through annual consultation, and changes are published on the TEQSA website. > 70% provider ratings in annual survey rate the process as transparent and information or consultation as good.	Target 1 retained but slightly reworded, as full implementation of CRIS has been achieved. Target 2 has been retained in its original wording. Target 3 removed as it could not be measured.

Corporate Plan information	Performance target/s from TEQSA's Corporate Plan 2025–29	Change	Performance target revisions in TEQSA's Corporate Plan 2026–30	Rationale for changes
Objective 3 > Key activity 3.5 > Measure 26	> PIMS fully implemented and mature, with full consideration of further updates. > Records management fully digitised and consistent with archival and other requirements. > Student records for provider closures complete and available on demand. > HRMIS effectively utilised and further modules considered and implemented. > TEQSA's external facing communications tools reflect best practice, including accessibility. > TEQSA employees report a strong and positive organisational culture, reflecting APS best-practice.	Amended (Target 1) Removed (Targets 2–6) New target added	> TEQSA's new regulatory case management system, TEQcore, is implemented in accordance with the approved roadmap. > TEQSA develops and publishes its key regulatory priorities by 30 June each year, with key milestones achieved as planned.	Original Target 1 was retained but reworded to reflect the name of the existing project. Original Targets 2–6 have all been achieved and no longer accurately reflect TEQSA's current strategic projects. The new target encompasses any existing and future priorities.

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