



Professor Edward Byrne AC
President and Vice-Chancellor

2nd May 2014

Julia Agostino
Secretary to Education, Employment and the Workplace Relations Committee
PO Box 6100,
Parliament House
Canberra
ACT 2600

Dear Ms Agostino,

Monash University Submission to the Inquiry into the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Amendment Bill 2014

I am grateful for the opportunity to respond to the Senate Inquiry on behalf of Monash University. The University has provided input into both the Go8 and Universities Australia submissions and is broadly supportive of the amendments being proposed. The comments offered below serve to emphasise the elements we, as a university, consider being particularly important.

Part 1: Quality assessments of higher education providers

Monash University strongly supports the removal of the quality assurance function from TEQSA's remit. TEQSA's focus should be on regulation of the Standards and its ESOS Act accountabilities. All TEQSA interactions can result in regulatory intervention.

Perhaps TEQSA could observe any particular trends across a range and or a number of providers that may require further investigation. This may relate to the Standards as interpreted or new developments not anticipated in the Standards. In such cases, a referral to the Minister to consider whether or not an independent national review should be initiated may be appropriate (the review of teacher education being an example).

Part 2: The delegation of decisions.

TEQSA has stated its desire for the power to delegate a range of decisions from Commissioners to TEQSA officers. This approach is strongly supported as it will facilitate more timely decisions. This is especially important for the timeliness of provider registration and reregistration. Any delay in these processes may have a negative impact on student and public perception of the quality of the provider.

Delegations will also allow the option for appeal to the Commission about decisions rather than needing to refer to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.



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Part 3: Extending periods of accreditation or registration

Monash University strongly supports the ability for accreditation and registration periods to be extended.

Part 5: The roles and responsibilities of the Chief Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer

Monash University supports the separation of the roles of Chief Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer as this is a more common model for such agencies. Responsibilities are commensurate with equivalent roles in other agencies.

Part 6: Notifying providers of decisions and the scope of ministerial directions

Monash University has reservations about the inclusion of ministerial powers of general direction and the impact they may have on the independence of the Agency.

Monash University supports Ministerial approval being required for legislative instruments which determine fees to be charged.

Yours sincerely

Professor Ed Byrne, AC
Vice-Chancellor and President