

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016

Outcome: Agency: TEQSA

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000783

Senator Carr, Kim provided in writing

TEQSA - registration renewals/reaccreditation

Question

TEQSA has a target of 40% of registration renewals to be completed in six months; and a target of 60% of initial accreditations to be completed in a similar period.

How were these targets set? Why are they considered satisfactory and appropriate? Could it be argued that both are too low? Why are they not too low?

For each of these two functions, how many – in numerical terms – were not completed within the target timeframe in 2014-15?

How many reaccreditations were not completed within the target timeframe? In practical terms, can you confirm that this means that a provider can continue to enrol and teach students, pending the completion of the reaccreditation?

Answer

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

The targets set by TEQSA in the 2014-2015 Corporate Plan were established having regard to TEQSA's:

- experience with the time taken to complete assessments
- knowledge of the providers due to submit renewal of registration applications
- expectation of the impact of the implementation of TEQSA's reform agenda on processing timeframes.

While TEQSA does not consider the targets as being too low, the targets have not been carried through into the 2015-16 Corporate Plan. The targets did not adequately reflect the impact of a number of factors beyond TEQSA's control which impact application processing times. These include the:

- quality of the application material and evidence provided by the applicant
- extent to which the applicant evidently meets the required standards
- time taken by applicants to respond to TEQSA's requests for additional information
- time taken by applicants to respond to TEQSA's findings.

TEQSA remains committed to ensuring the quality of Australian higher education is maintained, and that applications are only approved when applicants meet the Threshold Standards.

The number of assessments not completed within the 6 month target is shown in the table below:

	TOTAL
Re-registration	20
Accreditation	34

TEQSA can confirm that in the absence of specific regulatory action to the contrary, a provider can continue to enrol and teach students, pending the completion of the reaccreditation assessment.