

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
Additional Estimates Hearing 2011-12
15 February 2012

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: TERTIARY EDUCATION QUALITY STANDARDS AGENCY (TEQSA)

TOPIC: TEQSA Audits

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Mason

QUESTION No.: AI-185

In relation to the decision of TEQSA to not continue the practice of audits:

1. When was this decision taken?
2. Why was the decision taken?
3. Was the decision to not continue with audits a result of a lack of resources?
4. Will TEQSA be relying solely on risk matrixes and complaints in determining the health of an institution or will other methods also be used?
5. If TEQSA will be relying only on risk matrixes and complaints is TEQSA concerned that some concerns will not come to their attention?

ANSWER

1. The decision not to continue the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) Cycle 2 Audits of universities and self-accrediting providers in 2012 and beyond, was taken by the Commission on 16 November 2011.
2. The decision was taken after consideration of TEQSA's basic principles for regulation and the fact that the providers scheduled for audit in 2012 would also be required to undergo a renewal of registration process in 2012.
3. No.
4. TEQSA does not rely only on risk matrixes and complaints. It has available a range of tools/methods in addition to risk matrixes and complaints, for example, the re-registration process, annual information collection and reporting based on analytics.

The Regulatory Risk Framework identifies categories of risk in line with the Threshold Standards to frame a set of risk indicators. One of the risk indicators is based on student complaints. In the risk management cycle of TEQSA, both quantitative and qualitative information will be used to derive a holistic and summative risk profile for each provider. Qualitative observations will be made from the interactions between TEQSA and providers, as well as other sources available to TEQSA, in relation to possible impacts on meeting the Threshold Standards.

5. Please see above.