

Media Release

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TAFE DIRECTORS SUPPORT IMPROVED CLARITY FOR ROLE OF NON-UNIVERSITIES DELIVERING DEGREES UNDER NEW TEQSA LEGISLATION

TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) has broadly welcomed the latest proposals for draft Provider Standards to accompany the new TEQSA legislation, which will govern the Higher Education sector when introduced later this year.

TDA has long supported the easing of restrictions to the title of **“University Colleges”** to open up the diversity of provider types within the sector, noting that the separate title **“University”** is widely understood and valued in the community, while the term **“University College”** has had only very limited use under its current definition and is not well known.

It therefore remains of concern that the new draft Standards still retain the requirement that degrees including Masters (Research) and Doctorates would be an essential element for an institution to qualify as a **“University College.”**

Martin Riordan, Chief Executive Officer of TDA, said given the Federal Government’s endorsement of the Bradley Review of Higher Education and its vision for greater diversity and competition within the sector, it would make much more sense to have greater differentiation between a **University** and a **University College**. This could be achieved by creating a category of institution that places less emphasis on the highest qualification levels and more on degrees that meet industry demand and respond to areas of skill shortages.

“The difference between a **University** and a **University College** would be minimal and somewhat pointless if the proposed definitions go ahead,” Martin Riordan said.

TDA will make a further submission to the TEQSA draft legislation to detail its position in this and related areas. Concurrently, TDA is commenting on further amendments to the recently passed National VET Regulator Bill with a view to maximising alignment between the two pieces of legislation.

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Martin Riordan added: “While still maintaining that the provider categories defined in the new Standards for the governance of Australia’s higher education reforms could be improved, they do reinforce TDA’s position that provider categories are likewise required in the larger vocational education sector.”

TDA is at the forefront of arguments to ensure consistency between the two pieces of legislation so that the two regulatory bodies can merge as smoothly and as quickly as possible, consistent with the Federal Government’s plan for an integrated tertiary sector.

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