



Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham
Minister for Education and Training

MEDIA RELEASE

13 October 2015

New standards raise the bar on university student experience

Universities will be measured on how they are delivering students a quality experience, not filling out paperwork, under new higher education standards tabled in Parliament this week.

Minister for Education and Training Senator Simon Birmingham said universities would have 12 months to comply with the new standards, which were developed by the Higher Education Standards Panel, a legislative advisory body chaired by Professor Peter Shergold AC, and are scheduled to take effect from 1 January 2017.

“Too often, the rules governing universities have focused on dictating what universities must do in their processes, rather than on what outcomes they deliver for students,” Senator Birmingham said.

“For example, current standards list university human resource requirements by process, from induction to workload management and promotion.

“In contrast, the new standards require universities to manage their staffing needs in the way that best meets the educational, academic support and administrative needs of students.

“Universities will also be required to provide students with plain-English pre-enrolment information, and to create opportunities for academic success for all students, regardless of their background.”

Senator Birmingham said the new standards were drafted following a highly consultative three year review process, involving over 100 meetings with higher education providers and other stakeholders.

The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) will work closely with higher education providers throughout 2016 to ensure they are fully prepared to implement the new standards.

“The new standards will promote the quality of Australian higher education providers and reduce the administrative burden associated with compliance assessments by TEQSA,” Senator Birmingham said.

“Once fully implemented, the new standards are estimated to reduce the administrative burden on higher education providers by over \$2.5 million a year.

“It is the Panel’s view, and my expectation, that the new standards will be used by the sector not just to meet TEQSA’s requirements, but more importantly, to continue to improve opportunities and experiences for students,” Senator Birmingham said.

The standards are available at www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2015L01639

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