Recognising diversity and quality in private higher education

Claire Field
Chief Executive Officer
Australia’s private higher education sector

Today’s presentation

- ACPET’s role in the higher education sector
- Characteristics of private Higher Education Providers
- Student numbers at private HEPs
- Private HEP offerings
- Diversity and quality in private HEPs
- Compliance & TEQSA’s approach to regulating HEPs
- Raising quality
ACPET’s membership

National industry association for private tertiary education providers - 1,000 members including:

- 500+ delivering education to international students
- 100+ English language colleges
- 800+ vocational education and training (VET)
  - Mostly highly specialised with strong industry links
- 107 higher education providers
  - higher education-only institutions
  - dual sector institutions (VET and higher education)
  - private universities & private arms of public universities

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Creating futures
ACPET’s mission

• Enhance quality, choice, innovation and diversity in Australian education and training for individual, national and global development.

• Work proactively and cooperatively with government, education and training providers, industry and community organization.
Private higher education providers

TEQSA National Register of Higher Education - 1050 accredited courses & 172 providers:

- 40 ‘Australian universities’, of which 3 are private universities
- 2 ‘overseas universities’
- 1 ‘specialised university’
- 129 other HEPs (comprising private providers and TAFEs).
  - 73 dual sector providers offering both HE & VET
  - 23 operate across multiple jurisdictions
  - 23 have a religious/theological focus
Characteristics of private HEPs

- 43% offer courses at post graduate level
- 8% offer research degrees
- 36% offer Fee-Help courses
- 37% are approved to deliver courses to overseas students, and
- 36% offer FEE-HELP support to their students.

The majority (107) are ACPET members
## Domestic undergraduates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provider type</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>Change 09 to 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commencers (n.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table A</td>
<td>187,921</td>
<td>201,540</td>
<td>207,480</td>
<td>228,747</td>
<td>40,826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table B</td>
<td>3,480</td>
<td>3,567</td>
<td>3,631</td>
<td>3,614</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>12,860</td>
<td>13,750</td>
<td>14,622</td>
<td>14,324</td>
<td>1,464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>1,248</td>
<td>1,101</td>
<td>1,824</td>
<td>1,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>204,877</td>
<td>220,105</td>
<td>226,834</td>
<td>248,509</td>
<td>43,632</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All enrolments (n.)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table A</td>
<td>558,364</td>
<td>585,175</td>
<td>605,413</td>
<td>639,876</td>
<td>81,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table B</td>
<td>9,419</td>
<td>10,292</td>
<td>11,226</td>
<td>11,536</td>
<td>2,117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>25,434</td>
<td>27,446</td>
<td>29,626</td>
<td>31,096</td>
<td>5,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE</td>
<td>1,186</td>
<td>1,929</td>
<td>2,219</td>
<td>2,946</td>
<td>1,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>594,403</td>
<td>624,842</td>
<td>648,484</td>
<td>685,454</td>
<td>91,051</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACER for ACPET, 2013
Higher education enrolment profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share of commencers (%)</th>
<th>Table A</th>
<th>Table B</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>TAFE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other undergrad</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>96.1</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>80.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACER for ACPET, 2013
Enrolments by discipline (1/2)

Graphic showing enrolments by discipline with categories such as Food, Hospitality and Personal Services, Creative Arts, Society and Culture, Management and Commerce, and Education. The graph compares enrolments across TAFE, Private, Table A, and Table B. ACER for ACPET, 2013.
Enrolments by discipline (2/2)

- Health
- Agriculture, Environment
- Architecture and Building
- Engineering and Related
- Information Technology
- Natural and Physical Sciences

ACER for ACPET, 2013
Private HEPs & the broader sector

• Public awareness of private HEPs is steadily growing
• An important and growing part of the Australian higher education sector, even during the period of demand driven funding growth in the public university system.
• Private HEPs facilitate:
  – diversity in the HE sector
  – pathways across sectors, often within one institution
  – student mobility and choice
  – development of new dual-sector, collaborative programs.
Diversity amongst HEPs

• Diversity is the strength of private sector. Providers differ in:
  – type and size (generally relatively small, some very large)
  – mission and purpose
  – programs (full-fee local & international, pathways, commercial)
  – courses
  – type of students
  – some offer Fee-HELP places, others don’t

• Dual sector, partnerships, pathways, distinct culture(s)
Flexibility and responsiveness of HEPs

• A flexible and responsive approach ensures ongoing survival and growth

• Flexibility in terms of:
  – timing of delivery
  – delivery methods
  – delivery locations
  – design of programs

• Responsive to meeting the needs and preferences of clients
  – receive no recurrent government funding, dependent on the fluctuations of the market
Quality

Quality in private HEPs through:
• meeting requirements of AQF (accredited courses) and TEQSA Standards
• links to industry – strong graduate outcomes and employer satisfaction
• reputation and skill of specialist staff and ongoing industry involvement
• benchmarking and collaboration (eg Academic Boards Forum)
• student satisfaction
• measures to support research (eg ACPET Journal of Private Higher Education)
Regulatory forces on HEPs

- Governance by contracts
- ASIC, ASQA, TEQSA, ACNC, safety/health environment regulators, AQFC, security & rights regulators
- State/Territory govts
- International ESOS, international accreditation
- Funding & HESA
- Taxing authorities
- Professional/peak bodies
- Small business commissioner
- My Uni, the media

Review of Higher Education Regulation, 2013
TEQSA’s approach – HEP perspective

Positives
• National rather than state-based regulation
• Case managers

Negatives
• Excessive time & costs to meet regulatory requirements
• Uni-centric approach
• History of providers ignored
• Lack of coherence with other tertiary education regulation/legislation
• “Smaller providers hit hardest by TEQSA approach”

Review of Higher Education Regulation, 2013
ACPET lifting the quality bar

• Strengthened Code of Ethics for members, new requirements for ACPET membership & refusal of membership to inappropriate applicants
• Close working relationship with government regulators (TEQSA and ASQA), other peak bodies
• Numerous benchmarking initiatives – international student satisfaction, offshore delivery, VET + higher education members
• Members rewarded for participating in professional development activities
ACPET supporting quality and integrity

- The ACPET Journal for Private Higher Education
- The ACPET Higher Education Benchmarking System
- Collaboration with Forum of Academic Boards of private HEPs
- Annual ACPET Higher Education Symposium
- Annual ACPET Conference – Higher Education stream

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