

## Media Release —

### Independent Higher Education's Role Continues To Grow

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Australia's independent higher education providers continue to play a growing role in Australia's tertiary education system, says the Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia (ITECA). This view is underpinned by the latest 2017 data released by the sector's regulator, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).

The TEQSA data shows that that of the nation's 172 higher education providers, the non-university higher education system makes up just-over three-quarters of all provider types.

The independent higher education sector includes 50 not-for-profit providers and 68 for-profit providers that collectively supported 131,867 students, nearly 9% of the 1,537,018 students in higher education nation-wide.

"Australia has a world-class independent higher education sector that enjoys a reputation for great levels of student satisfaction. The growing prominence of independent higher education providers is something that, as a nation, we should encourage and be proud of," said Mr Troy Williams, ITECA Chief Executive.

According to the data, all but one of the independent higher education providers have less than 5,000 students and most have less than 500. This is due to the fact that the independent sector excels at specialisation, with each provider offering programs in one or two subject areas.

"Specialist education affords students a superior learning experience upon which independent providers have built their reputation for quality," Mr Williams said.

The TEQSA data for 2017 also highlights that it is independent providers that constitute most of the dual sector providers. There are 54 non-profit and for-profit dual-sector providers, versus 29 public TAFE and university dual sector providers.

"There are many in the business community and education system arguing for an integrated tertiary education system in which the higher education sector and the vocational education and training sector operate as one but retain their separate identities. The latest TEQSA data shows that it's independent providers that are playing a lead role to create an integrated tertiary education system," Mr Williams concluded.

The *Statistics Report On TEQSA Registered Higher Education Providers* report can be downloaded at:  
<https://bit.ly/36dbCXD>

Ends.

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