

Transitioning from the TEQSA Confirmed Evidence Table to a Self-Assurance Approach

Greg Whateley and Tom O'Connor

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The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Confirmed Evidence Table (CET) has long served as a structured framework for higher education providers to demonstrate compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF). However, many institutions – and over a number of years – have been seeking to move towards a self-assurance approach, which emphasises continuous improvement, internal accountability, and a culture of evidence-based decision-making. The national regulator has acquiesced.

Understanding the TEQSA Confirmed Evidence Table

The TEQSA Confirmed Evidence Table (CET) provides a template for providers to map evidence against specific HESF standards. This approach ensures consistency and transparency but can be perceived as compliance-focused and potentially restrictive, as it encourages a checklist mentality rather than fostering innovation or contextual responsiveness.

Self-assurance Approach

Self-assurance in higher education means that the provider takes primary responsibility for ensuring it meets regulatory standards through its own robust internal processes. Rather than producing evidence solely for external review, the institution develops and maintains systems, practices, and documentation that demonstrate ongoing compliance and quality enhancement. This approach is more dynamic, allowing for tailored responses to challenges and opportunities, and encourages a culture of ownership among staff.

Key Steps in Transitioning to Self-Assurance

There are a number of steps that *should* be considered in the transition from the CET to the SA model. These steps include -

Review existing evidence and processes – beginning with evaluating the current evidence and mechanisms used for compliance. Identify areas of duplication, gaps, and inefficiencies that result from the Confirmed Evidence Table (CET) approach.

Build internal quality assurance frameworks – start with developing (or strengthening) internal policies, committees, and review cycles that ensure standards are met. These frameworks should be embedded in everyday practice, not just for audit purposes.

Empower staff and stakeholders – commence with training staff on the principles of self-assurance and their roles in maintaining quality. Engage stakeholders in regular self-review and reflection, promoting a shared sense of responsibility.

Integrate evidence into decision-making – best initiated by shifting the focus from collecting evidence for external bodies to using evidence to inform strategic decisions, curriculum design, and student support. Make evidence collection and analysis routine and meaningful – essentially this becomes part of the DNA of the institution.

Monitor, evaluate, and improve – by establishing regular cycles of monitoring and evaluation (self-audits/rolling audits). Use the findings to drive continuous improvement - and document changes and outcomes as part of your ongoing assurance process.

Benefits of the self-assurance approach

The shift to a self-assurance approach has many benefits including -

- Encourages a culture of continuous improvement and innovation
- Streamlines compliance, reducing unnecessary paperwork and duplication
- Fosters greater engagement and accountability among staff
- Allows for more flexible, context-sensitive responses to quality issues
- Prepares institutions for future regulatory changes and expectations (which are inevitable).

Challenges of the self-assurance approach

Transitioning from a compliance-based approach to self-assurance is not without challenges and requires a significant cultural shift including –

- Leadership commitment
- clear communication
- ongoing professional development.

Providers must ensure that internal mechanisms are *robust* enough to satisfy regulatory *scrutiny*, even without the structured template of the CET.

Moving from the TEQSA Confirmed Evidence Table (CET) to a self-assurance (SA) approach represents an important development (evolution) in quality assurance for Australian higher education providers it has been long overdue. By prioritising internal responsibility, continuous improvement, and meaningful use of evidence, institutions can not only meet regulatory requirements but also enhance educational outcomes and organisational effectiveness.

Also worth reading –

Ket issue associated with operating a HEP (July 2024) -
[6113ad_7e531373e6404ea0b7167950e78539da.pdf](#)

Good compliance is good business (August 2024) -
[6113ad_6c3cfa0b3a084f53a8373408af0e74d0.pdf](#)

Rolling audits – a mechanism for self-assurance (August 2024) -

[6113ad_beb80a2de7ae43dc9fb8c7bedfa4e78b.pdf](#)

What are the threshold standards and why are they important (September 2024) -

[6113ad_8584b9e8e229438d830f63af90c030dd.pdf](#)

Self-assurance is the name of the game (June 2025) -

[6113ad_01ebe83fd03b40568654a89c9b4d714b.pdf](#)

The path to re-accreditation (August 2025) -

[6113ad_4c6a56c142584b73ba27602ccdab04be.pdf](#)

Emeritus Professor Greg Whateley is currently the Chief Executive and Executive Dean at the *Australian Guild of Education*. He recently completed a re-accreditation process using the CET and a renewal of registration using the refreshed self-assurance approach.

Associate Professor Tom O'Connor is currently the Academic Director at the *Australian Guild of Education*. He recently completed a re-accreditation process using the CET and a renewal of registration using the refreshed self-assurance approach.