

## ACDS AGM 2026 – Summary of Presentation by Professor Kerri-Lee Krause

### Background

Professor Kerri-Lee Krause, Chief Commissioner and Chair of TEQSA, was invited to provide an opening presentation ahead of the 10 March 2026 Annual General Meeting of the ACDS. Professor Krause delivered a structured and thought-provoking address, supported by a PowerPoint presentation (available [here](#)), framed as a focused “three-point conversation” on key issues affecting the higher education sector. The presentation was followed by a question-and-answer session, which provided additional insight into sector concerns and priorities.

The following sections summarise key issues and themes raised during Professor Krause’s presentation and subsequent discussion.

### Sector-level risks and TEQSA’s evolving focus

Professor Krause:

- Presented a set of ten sector-level risks as a “thought starter”, noting they were not exhaustive or ranked, and inviting reflection on gaps or priorities.
- Emphasised a shift toward identifying patterns and systemic risks across the sector.
- Highlighted the importance of TEQSA’s engagement with the sector in refining TEQSA’s understanding of emerging risks.

### Self-assurance and proportionate regulation

She:

- Recognised that many universities demonstrate strong internal quality assurance and sustained good practice.
- Indicated TEQSA’s intent to “lighten the load” where such self-assurance is evident, reducing unnecessary duplication.
- Distinguished this from a “light touch” approach, emphasising that regulation must remain robust and evidence-based.
- Noted that TEQSA will continue to apply targeted regulatory interventions in cases of acute or emerging risk.

### Regulatory ecosystem and system complexity

During the conversation, Professor Krause:

- Described TEQSA as part of a broader ecosystem of regulators and agencies, requiring coordination to reduce duplication.
- Acknowledged sector concerns regarding regulatory fragmentation and multiple data requests.
- Highlighted efforts to move toward “ask once” approaches and better data sharing across agencies. She explained that key elements include coordination with ASQA, engagement

with the National Student Ombudsman and Fair Work Ombudsman, use of Jobs and Skills Australia data, and interaction with emerging bodies such as a gender-based violence regulator and the interim Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC).

Professor Krause also noted broader concerns about regulatory burden and ongoing work to identify practical opportunities for streamlining.

## **Implications for Deans and academic leadership**

She also:

- Described Deans as “sense-makers”, operating across institutional boundaries and managing competing pressures.
- Noted that Deans are often the primary point of escalation for student concerns and complaints.
- Emphasised their central role in ensuring teaching quality, student experience, and academic standards.

From a regulatory perspective, issues such as student support, inclusivity, and quality are expected to be addressed across institutions, including at institutional governance level, and are core to accountability.

Professor Krause invited Deans to contribute insights into how regulatory expectations operate in practice and where frameworks may not fully capture institutional realities.

## **Regulatory strategy and sector engagement**

In speaking to strategy and engagement, Professor Krause:

- Highlighted the need to update regulatory approaches in light of system-wide risks and expectations around self-assurance.
- Foreshadowed a forthcoming consultation on TEQSA’s regulatory strategy.
- Encouraged ACDS members to engage and consider implications for their institutions.

## **Discussion and sector perspectives (Q&A)**

Professor Krause invited questions and comments, in response to which:

- Members highlighted potential additional risks, including declining student participation in science disciplines
- Discussion reflected concerns about workforce pipeline challenges and sustainability of science enrolments.
- Reinforced the importance of ongoing dialogue between TEQSA and sector leaders.

## **Concluding reflections**

Professor Krause’s presentation provided a clear overview of key regulatory and systemic challenges shaping the higher education sector. The session highlighted the importance of sector-level risk awareness, proportionate regulation, the complexity of the regulatory ecosystem, and the critical leadership role of Deans.