



Submission in response to the Australian Universities Accord Interim Report

Prepared for the Department of Education; Australian Universities Accord Panel

Prepared by the My eQuals Steering Committee and Heads of Student Administration (Australia and New Zealand)

Supported by TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) and Independent Higher Education Australia (IHEA)

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This submission, presented by the My eQuals Steering Committee and the ANZ Heads of Student Administration (HOSA), acknowledges the Interim Report's support *“of a national skills passport to help graduates impress their qualifications on employers, become more employable and achieve career progression.”*¹

We also agree that such a National Skills Passport could form part of a *“National Credentials Platform (NCP) which aims to be a secure digital platform for students and graduates to access, compile, display, and share their higher education qualifications, microcredentials and general capabilities.”*²

Through this submission we advocate for the establishment of a National Credentials Platform (NCP) that builds on My eQuals, in strong preference to the alternative of building a new platform.

We strongly believe that a pathway by which My eQuals transitions to become the NCP will best serve Australian learners in their lifelong education journey, significantly reduce risk, investment and timeframes, and will build on the strong support that exists in the sector for My eQuals.

Benefits of an approach that builds on My eQuals

Establishing a National Credentials Platform is a significant endeavour that involves more than the launch of a technology platform. The challenges associated with such an initiative, in terms of cost, effort, and complexity are immense and success is not guaranteed, especially if the approach is to start from scratch.

We advocate for an approach that builds on My eQuals for the following reasons:

1. **Sector support** – My eQuals was established in 2018 through collaboration involving all Australian and New Zealand universities. Its participation base has since expanded to TAFEs, NUHEPS, VET providers and pathway colleges. Collaboration on My eQuals continues through various bodies representing these segments of the sector.
2. **Adoption:** More than 2 million Learners already engage with their credentials portfolio for further study, employment and migration purposes. To date, more than 8 million credentials (AQF/NZQF and micro) have been issued to those Learners.
3. **Investment:** The sector has invested approximately \$30 million in My eQuals, it would be fiscally responsible to preserve and build on this investment.
4. **Global recognition** – My eQuals is already connected to national credential systems (e.g. North America, China, UK). and communities (e.g. Groningen Declaration Network) elsewhere and has established recognition as the trusted ANZ credentials platform.
5. **Benefits Realisation:** My eQuals is delivering significant benefits, both qualitative and quantitative to its community, including efficiency benefits exceeding \$10 Million per annum to participating education providers.

¹ Australian Universities Accord – Interim Report. Section 2.2.7

² Australian Universities Accord – Interim Report. Section 2.2.7

- 6. Governance and Operating Model** – An existing governance and operating model that fosters collaboration and is scalable to the needs of a national platform.

My eQuals transition to a National Credentials Platform

My eQuals continues to evolve in accordance with the roadmap which includes the launch of new services, extending collaboration to “best of breed” technology partners and growing tertiary education providers participation.

However, there is recognition that an NCP has to be broader in scope and participation than My eQuals today to best serve the national needs in Australia’s future education system. The My eQuals organisation and structures are best placed for this expansion.

The My eQuals team participated in the NCP Beta phase which completed in December 2022. As part of that work, a *Plan to Production* was prepared for the NCP Project Board. That report further details a program of work that would allow My eQuals to evolve to become the National Credentials Platform, in line with this submission.

The My eQuals team welcome the opportunity to work with government to realise the National Skills Passport/Credentials Platform ambition.

This submission is supported by TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) and Independent Higher Education Australia (IHEA). Many of their members are active participants in My eQuals.

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