

ACQUISITION CASE STUDY

Entering Australia's Higher Education Sector Through Strategic Acquisition



BACKGROUND

Our client, an established Registered Training Organisation (RTO), had long-standing success in the vocational education sector and was exploring opportunities to expand into higher education. With a growing student base and strategic ambitions to offer degree-level qualifications, the client reached out to DVE for guidance. They faced a big decision: build a new institute from scratch or acquire an existing provider. They needed clarity on TEQSA's requirements and confidence that their investment would deliver long-term success.

PROBLEM

While the client had a strong foundation in the VET sector, entering higher education presented a complex set of challenges. Key questions included:

- ◆ What are the regulatory and compliance requirements for TEQSA initial registration?
- ◆ Should they establish a new higher education institute from scratch, or pursue the acquisition of an existing provider?
- ◆ What policies, governance structures, and resources would be needed to satisfy the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HESF)?

The requirements and resources for initial registration are significant. Our client faced a critical decision that involved balancing the flexibility and customisation of starting from scratch with the ease of quick market entry and convenience of an existing infrastructure that acquisitions offer.



Before committing to initial registration, undertake a structured assessment of governance, resources, and compliance readiness.

VALUE ADD

DVE brings deep expertise in guiding providers through initial registration, due diligence, and acquisition in the higher education sector. Whether setting up from scratch or navigating complex mergers and acquisitions, we provide clarity, structure, and assurance every step of the way.

Our team works at the intersection of VET and higher education, giving clients practical, regulator-aligned advice that cuts through complexity and avoids costly missteps. Providers choose DVE because we don't just map the pathway - we de-risk it.

Need help entering the higher education sector in Australia? Call us today on **1800 870 677** or email us at info@dvesolutions.com.au.

SOLUTION

DVE worked closely with the client through a series of advisory workshops and training sessions designed to demystify the initial registration process. This included:

- ◆ detailed briefings on TEQSA's requirements for initial registration and the HESF
- ◆ comparative analysis of the two pathways: establishment versus acquisition
- ◆ practical guidance on governance, academic quality assurance, student support, and resourcing.

After several months, the client opted to explore acquisition opportunities. They returned to DVE to lead the due diligence process, where the DVE team:

- ◆ conducted a comprehensive compliance review and due diligence report of the target institution
- ◆ assessed corporate governance and academic risks
- ◆ provided structured recommendations to support negotiations and ensure alignment with regulatory requirements.

OUTCOME

The client successfully acquired an existing higher education provider and transitioned into the sector with DVE's support. With the foundation established, they subsequently undertook TEQSA re-registration—a rigorous test of governance, quality assurance, and compliance maturity.

The client is currently awaiting their re-registration outcome, but the journey to date has positioned them strongly for future growth in higher education.