

MEDIA RELEASE

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Peak body urges Senate to pass amended higher education bill

The peak body for the private education and training sector has urged the Senate to pass the changes to the Higher Education and Research Reform Bill announced by Minister for Education and Training the Hon Christopher Pyne today.

“Reform is vital if Australia’s higher education system is to continue to build on quality and grow our knowledge base,” chief executive of the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) Rod Camm said.

Mr Camm said it was time the more than 100,000 private students in Australia who chose to study with a non-university higher education provider were not penalised for their choice.

“These students have been forgotten in the debate so far,” Mr Camm said.

“There is no reason why they should not be afforded the same opportunity of access to the Commonwealth loan scheme to support them in their study, when their degree is of equal value to its equivalent at a public university.”

“Why should they be required to pay an additional 25 per cent administration fee, on top of fee costs, simply because of where they choose to study?”

Mr Camm called on the Senators not to overlook their responsibilities to these students and to the future health of the sector.

“It’s time Australia’s higher education policies supported an innovative and adaptive system, driven by student demand,” Mr Camm said.

“Without these reforms, Australia’s tertiary education system is hamstrung in its effort to remain at the top of an increasingly competitive international marketplace.”

Mr Camm said students were best placed to choose the qualification and the educational institution that met their needs, especially when the same rules applied to all.

Media contact:

Rod Camm, ACPET, 0409 484 051

Madeleine Brennan, Ten Colours, 0402 715 577.