

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Shared solution must be found to end higher ed stalemate**

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) today called for the higher education sector to work together and identify a way forward following the second defeat of the government's higher education reforms in the Senate.

ACPET CEO Rod Camm said it was time for key stakeholders across the sector to work together to find a solution to the current impasse that was creating uncertainty and risking the quality of Australia's higher education system.

"Throughout this debate, there have been many areas of common ground," Mr Camm said. "Let's take stock, look at current concerns and re-engage the community in the debate."

Mr Camm said the reforms were too important to let wither on the vine.

"The future of our sector, and that of current and future students, demands that we find a way."

Mr Camm has called for universities, private higher education providers and peak bodies to collectively develop the key principles and proposals that will build a sustainable model for the future.

"Experts like Andrew Norton, Bruce Chapman and Peter Noonan have all made valuable contributions to the debate," Mr Camm said. "It is now time to come together and see if there is a workable solution to the necessary reform of the higher education sector."

Mr Camm said it was disappointing that the needs of more than 100,000 private students in Australia who choose to study with non-university higher education providers were overlooked in the debate, and will continue to be disadvantaged.

"These students should be afforded the same opportunity of access to the Commonwealth loan scheme to support them in their study," Mr Camm said. "Their degree is of equal value to its equivalent at a public university, so 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 said he believed everyone could agree that equity of access, together with measures which protected students from low socio-economic and disadvantaged backgrounds, were vital for reforms to be passed.

"A policy solution is vital if Australia's higher education system is to continue to build on quality and grow our knowledge base," he said.

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