

**September 26, 2016**

**ACPET backs call for fairer and more consistent funding for post-school study**

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) has today backed the recommendations of the Mitchell Institute, which called for an overhaul of funding arrangements for all tertiary education and training in Australia.

The report found students were currently being driven towards courses for which the government offered loans, meaning students tended to favour university courses and diplomas rather than skills-based certificate III and IV courses.

ACPET CEO Rod Camm said the report highlighted the piecemeal approach to funding post-school education, and said students should all be treated equally regardless of whether they are in higher education or vocational education.

“ACPET welcomes today's release of the Mitchell Institute report, *A new system for financing Australian tertiary education*, that once again has highlighted the parlous state of the VET sector as a consequence of government governance and funding mess,” Mr Camm said.

“We call on the Federal Government to recognise the need for an overhaul of the tertiary education system funding, as highlighted by the Mitchell Institute.”

Mr Camm said the report highlights the impact on enrolments in vocational education and training flowing from government inaction on basic funding support.

“The fact that government-funded enrolments in VET declined 10 per cent from 2014 to 2015 signals some fundamental problems. In real terms, funding has declined about 30 per cent over a decade. At a time when we should be lifting skills training for our young people and workforce, it's actually going backwards.”

Mr Camm said existing tertiary education funding arrangements were distorting students' decision-making about their futures, and he said ACPET supported the Mitchell Institute's call for a complete overhaul.

“We need funding that supports students to make the right decision about their careers and skill development needs.

“With the current national Commonwealth - State VET funding agreements due to expire in about nine months, and with future higher education funding uncertain, Minister Birmingham needs to urgently put in place a strong policy framework to guide the development of sensible, coherent funding for the tertiary education sector.”

[ENDS]

**Rod Camm is available for interview. Please phone the SAS Group on 07 3221 9222, or directly on 0409 484 051.**