

MEDIA RELEASE

16 June 2016

Quality private education and training delivers for national economy

Australia needs a diverse higher education and training sector with quality private providers delivering choice and quality outcomes for students and employers.

Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) CEO Rod Camm said student access to government funded training through quality private training providers was critical to meeting the future skill needs of Australia's economy.

"Private training has matured over the past 20 years and is the choice of employers and more than 2.2 million, or 57 per cent of Australian students, every year," Mr Camm said.

"Private training delivers strong job placement outcomes and delivers more flexible training options."

Mr Camm said that proposed ALP policy to guarantee government providers as the dominant providers of training to Australian students was not the answer to meeting the skill needs of students and industry.

"This week I have written to the Australian Labor Party asking them to explain what their TAFE funding guarantee will mean and how much funding will be taken away from the programs that provide real choice and flexibility for students and employers," he said.

"Our members are concerned the proposed policy would wind back more than 20 years of successful reform.

"We've seen the devastating effect of similar policies from the recent South Australian experience where training ground to halt."

Mr Camm said Australia had a world class higher education and training sector and private providers were an essential component of that success.

"Access to training, particularly in regional locations, is enhanced by a diverse and responsive range of quality providers that offer students and employers genuine choice in courses and delivery modes," he said.

"Private training providers, year in and year out, are among the top performers at both state and national training awards and there are countless examples to demonstrate the amazing results our sector produces every day.

"Students and industry should be able to choose their training provider from among quality providers and that should include, but not be limited to, TAFE."

Mr Camm said while private providers were alarmed by the ALP's policy intention to direct the vast majority of funding to government providers, the Coalition was yet to provide clarity about the future role of private higher education and training should they be re-elected.

"We need a commitment that Australia's private training students will not be disadvantaged by any policy reform that limits their ability to choose to study their preferred course with their preferred provider," he said.

"We are urging private higher education and training students, providers and employers to join our efforts to ensure that Student Choice Counts (www.studentchoicecounts.com) this election."

ENDS

For further information: SAS Group 0467 792 013