Victoria’s training sector to benefit from new skills agreement

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) has congratulated the Victorian Government for signing up to the Prime Minister’s “Skills for All Australians” reforms at last week’s COAG meeting, with the peak body saying COAG’s decision to follow the lead of Victoria’s own training reforms was an endorsement of their success.

The reform package, first announced by Prime Minister Gillard last month, will see Victoria’s Vocational Education and Training (VET) students receive guaranteed government subsidised training to Certificate 3 level, a HECS-style loan scheme for students at Diploma and Advanced Diploma level, and greater choice between private and public institutions through new contestable funding arrangements.

ACPET CEO, Claire Field, said the national reforms draw heavily from the successful blueprint of similar reforms already undertaken in Victoria and South Australia, which have proven that competition between providers is in the best interests of students, institutions and employers alike.

“COAG’s decision last week to adopt the Skills for All reforms is a strong endorsement of the Victorian Government’s leadership on training reform, which has already put the State ahead of the game by delivering increased student numbers, greater student satisfaction and a more industry-responsive training sector,” Ms Field said.

Ms Field said private and not-for-profit vocational training providers in Victoria already had a good track record of delivering employment related training, and opening up the State’s training sector to a more diverse range of providers has allowed students to choose between a greater range of high quality providers.

“Victoria’s private VET providers have an outstanding record of getting graduates jobs, with 80.5% of students in employment related training getting a job when they complete their studies,” Ms Field said.

“Private providers are also performing well at meeting the broader equity and access goals of training, with 81.2% of female graduates gaining employment, along with 72.9% of those who speak a language other than English at home and 60.9% of those with a disability.”

"The Victorian Premier had indicated pre-COAG that the Commonwealth offer of $2.2 billion was insufficient for the reforms to continue. It is pleasing to see that the Commonwealth offer has been accepted and that Victoria's reforms can continue."

“The challenge for Victoria now is to continue its reforms in a cohesive and sustainable manner, with ongoing input from the sector,” Ms Field said.

Claire Field is available for comment.
Media Contact: Ben Eade, 0406 641 881