MEDIA RELEASE

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Peak body welcomes additional funds for more than 16,000 students in NSW

The peak body for the private education and training sector has welcomed the announcement of additional funding for vocational education and training (VET) placements in NSW, with an additional $57 million to be distributed through the Smart and Skilled program announced by the NSW Minister for Education Adrian Piccoli late yesterday.

Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) chief executive Rod Camm said the additional funding was a welcome first step in improving the outcomes from the Smart and Skilled program and ensuring the skills sector best met the needs of students and employers.

“This additional funding is good news for the more than 16,000 additional students that will be able to train next year with the help of NSW Government subsidised training,” Mr Camm said. “It’s also a welcome development for our members, many of whom have raised concerns with the design and delivery of the Smart and Skilled program.”

Mr Camm said the program was a vital part of transforming the state’s training sector and improvements were essential to ensure it increased student numbers, improved productivity and job readiness and reduced costs.

“Good reforms can take time but we mustn’t lose sight of the end goal which is to ensure NSW has a high-quality, innovative, flexible and demand-driven training system,” Mr Camm said. “To do this we need to ensure capacity is built across the state, with a range of different providers, so that students have real choice.”

“As the state’s skills requirements are growing, we would like to see funding extended to those providers who have met quality benchmarks but have so far missed out on securing contracts, especially those in regional NSW,” he said.

Mr Camm said ACPET would continue to work collaboratively with the Baird government and other stakeholders to ensure the Smart and Skilled program delivers on its goal to drive innovation in the VET sector in NSW.

“It’s in everyone’s interest that we continue to build on the reforms to date,” Mr Camm said. “Students are at the heart of these reforms and they want access to the best quality training regardless of which provider they choose or where it is located.”

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