MEDIA STATEMENT
Wednesday, 29th August 2012

Political leaders set to clash at national education conference

Fireworks are expected in Sydney this week when political leaders of all ‘stripes’ outline their visions for the future of Australia’s tertiary education sector to delegates at the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) National Conference.

With the funding and structure of vocational and higher education high on the national agenda, ACPET is bringing together Senator the Hon Chris Evans, Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research, The Hon Sussan Ley, Shadow Minister for Employment Participation and Federal Greens Senator, Lee Rhiannon, to outline their different perspectives on Australia’s educational future.

Joining them to discuss reforms to Queensland’s training system will be Minister for Education, Training and Employment, The Hon John-Paul Langbroek, while NSW Parliamentary Secretary, Gabrielle Upton, will provide the opening to a conference that promises to showcase the diverse views that are driving Australia’s education reforms.

ACPET CEO, Claire Field, said she expected “frank and fearless” presentations from political presenters, adding that she was thrilled ACPET had been able to bring them together for the two day conference.

“The debate about the nation’s tertiary education future has reached a tipping point, with governments around the country recognising the need for urgent reforms and currently thrashing out what those reforms should look like,” Ms Field said.

“The fiery exchanges of recent weeks between politicians, educators and commentators in the sector show us just how important it is that our tertiary education system keeps pace with the community’s expectations. Whatever reforms we undertake, we need to encourage robust debate to make sure we get the reforms right.”

“This debate is critical to the national interest. Reforming Australia’s tertiary education system is the most important public policy issue of our time, and I’m delighted the ACPET conference will highlight over the next two days the most important political thinkers driving those reforms,” she said.

Media Invitation:

What: ACPET National Conference
When: Thursday 30th August to Friday 31st August
Where: Westin Hotel, Sydney
Conference program: www.acpet2012.com.au
Contact: To arrange interviews or media access contact Ben Eade on 0406 641 881