ACPET supports recommendations to strengthen quality

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training today welcomed the recommendations of the Australian Skills Quality Authority to strengthen quality in vocational education and training following the release of three strategic reviews.

Chief Executive Officer of ACPET, Ms Claire Field, said “the level of non-compliance identified in these reports issued today is of concern to all of us with a stake in Australia’s VET sector. ACPET and its members have been at the forefront in recent years of lifting quality in the sector through focussing on strengthened assessment practices, improved student fee protection, and a national commitment to ongoing professional development.”

“ACPET welcomes the recommendations of ASQA to amend the national standards for registered training organisations to see greater attention paid to assessment. ACPET also endorses ASQA’s call for more details from Industry Skills Councils to be included in Training Packages on matters including minimum work placement requirements, volume of learning for qualifications and ‘stand alone’ units of competency, and to strengthen the assessment requirements in the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAE40110)” she said.

“What a shame that the National Skills Standards Council has wasted so much time over the past two years on a review that lacked rigour, evidence and common sense. The sector has been distracted by trivialities such as ‘Licensed’ rather than ‘Registered Training Organisations’, on minimum capital requirements and the like; rather than on action to lift quality.”

“ASQA’s reviews shows that ACPET’s concerns about the NSSC review have proven correct. The review did not start with an analysis of identified issues of non-compliance, in fact it seemed to discount any need for evidence from the regulators as a logical starting point for the review. Now that the evidence is in front of us all it is clear what changes are needed to both the standards for RTOs and to other components of the VET Quality Framework. Collectively these challenges can and must be addressed by the sector”

Ms Field noted that “ACPET and its members are proud of their national professional development framework which is aligned to the standards for RTOs and in the past two years has included over 248 sessions to 6,725 practitioners, managers and administrative staff.”

“ACPET is also pleased to have been working with the governments of NSW, Victoria and Queensland on strengthened assessment practices through stronger industry validation. ACPET hasn’t just been working with governments though, in November 2013 we held a highly successful Learning Summit on Assessment in Brisbane, offering members the opportunity to hear from experts (including ACPET staff) on assessment practices of high performing RTOs.”

“ACPET’s quality ‘healthchecks’ and our Tuition Assurance Scheme to protect student fees paid in advance are further ways in which we are working with our members. We look forward to measures being introduced to safeguard the interests of our members from those providers interested in profits before learning. No-one wins from a race to the bottom. It is high time for standards to be strengthened to protect the interests of students, employers and high performing providers. ASQA is to be congratulated for the work done on these reviews”, said Ms Field.

Claire Field is available for comment: 0411 240 671