MEDIA RELEASE
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Senator Evans Supports Diversity of Education Providers

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) today commended the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations, Senator Chris Evans, for setting caps on universities delivering qualifications below degree level.

Senator Evans announced today that universities delivering vocational qualifications such as diplomas and advanced diplomas will be subject to annual allocations agreed between the Government and each university.

ACPET CEO, Claire Field, said Senator Evans’ announcement strikes the right balance between enabling institutions to deliver a range of courses, while supporting a diverse tertiary education sector that enables each type of institution to flourish.

“Students in Australia are fortunate to have access to a vibrant and diverse education sector that offers a genuine choice between not only different levels of qualifications, but importantly, different types of institutions, from traditional universities and private higher education providers, to TAFE colleges and innovative private vocational institutions.”

“These institutions each have their own strengths and deliver unique benefits to students, making it vital that our policy settings don’t tip the scales in favour of one type of institution to the detriment of other providers and, ultimately, to student choice,” Ms Field said.

“Offering universities uncapped Government funding to deliver sub-degree courses would severely threaten the sustainability of many TAFE and private vocational institutions, ultimately limiting the choices available to students.”

Ms Field said ACPET recognises the value in universities delivering some vocational-level courses, just as there is value in funding some non-university higher education providers to deliver degrees, and she encouraged Senator Evans to work with the private higher education sector to ensure it was also able to thrive in the new tertiary sector.

“The Government is rightly keeping a firm hand on the tiller to ensure our tertiary education sector is a sustainable, competitive, one,” she said.

“Future generations of students deserve access to diverse education and training options that are responsive to the needs of industry and the future challenges of our nation.”

“A dynamic sector with many different types of institutions is the best way to provide that.”

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