ACPET supports apprenticeship reforms

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) welcomes the government’s apprenticeship reforms announced yesterday by the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research, Senator Chris Evans.

ACPET CEO, Claire Field, said the industry-led mentoring program would provide much needed advice to students, parents and job seekers.

“Only about half of all people who start an apprenticeship finish their apprenticeship,” Ms Field said. “We need to lift the completion rate by ensuring that people choose apprenticeships for the right reason and then get good support while undertaking their training.

“The $18 million mentoring program will help achieve this. It is only natural that apprentices, particularly young apprentices, at times consider leaving their apprenticeships. This program will help guide and support them through the challenging times.”

The program will be available to 12,000 apprentices over the coming year but it will benefit more than just apprentices – it will also help parents and schools.

“It is important to realise that these benefits extend to the whole community – completing an apprenticeship is good for the individual, but it’s also good for industry and good for our economy,” Ms Field said.

An improvement in apprenticeship numbers needs to be sustained to ensure a continuing supply of skilled tradespeople. Skills Australia forecasts that by 2015, Australia will need an extra 2.1 million people in the workforce with higher VET qualifications.

“As part of addressing the skills needs of Australia it is essential that we have a high quality, efficient and effective apprenticeship system. Lifting apprenticeship completions is vital in lifting workforce participation and productivity,” Ms Field said.

ACPET is pleased the government has listened to stakeholders, including ACPET, on the need for a mentoring program.

Claire Field is available for comment.

Media contact: Trish Bancroft 02 8280 8116 or 0439 042 698