MEDIA RELEASE
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**Political leaders address ACPET National Conference**

Delegates at the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) National Conference have this morning heard from federal political leaders that the opportunities for Australia’s education sector, both domestically and globally, are enormous, and there is a “very clear commitment” to growing Australia’s international education sector in the years ahead.

Minister for Education and Training, Hon Christopher Pyne MP, told conference delegates that the federal government was very ambitious about the future of the sector, and expects growth in education and training that “reflects the scale and pace of economic transformation taking place in our region.”

However, Minister Pyne said there are many challenges ahead if Australia is going to continue as a global leader in education, including the need to maintain quality standards in the sector and ensure ethical conduct by international education agents.

Minister Pyne said that whether in the international education, vocational education and training (VET) or higher education sector, the Federal Government sees an important and growing role for high quality, innovative private providers in a growing marketplace that offers students more choice and diversity of education providers.

Later this morning, Shadow Minister for Vocational Education, Hon Sharon Bird MP, said the Federal Opposition is committed to building an education and training sector that equips learners for a labour market characterised by more frequent career changes, digital disruption and an erosion of many traditional jobs in favour of new, often as yet un-imagined roles.

Ms Bird told delegates that being digitally literate is increasingly a requirement for workplace participation, and it was a fundamental role of the education and training sector to prepare learners to not only manage change, but grasp it and realise its opportunities.

Ms Bird spoke about the importance of improving quality in the VET sector, and acknowledged ACPET’s leadership role in this regard, saying “the development and implementation of your code of ethics is an exemplary achievement”.

To achieve the goal of improving quality outcomes training providers must reflect, through all aspects of their operations, a commitment to best practice with student outcomes at the centre of all activity, Ms Bird said.

The ACPET National Conference is the largest gathering of private tertiary education and training sector in Australia. This year’s conference is being held in Melbourne from August 26-28.

For the full conference program visit [www.acpet.edu.au](http://www.acpet.edu.au).

Contact:
Bess Brennan, 0481 358 471