MEDIA RELEASE
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Government Crippling International Education Sector with Assessment Changes

The Federal Government’s changes to the assessment levels for international students will hinder Australia’s most innovative international education institutions, punish well-intentioned students and further harm our reputation as a study destination, the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) said today.

ACPET CEO, Andrew Smith, said the blunt withdrawal of opportunities for international students to package courses and embark on long-term study in Australia will cause serious contraction in the sector, and he requested the Government to defer the changes pending discussions with the international education sector.

“With inadequate consultation, the Federal Government has announced changes that show an uncharacteristic disregard for the concerns of one of Australia’s largest export industries and the 125,000 people it employs,” Mr Smith said. “Good colleges are being hit hard by these changes, which have already resulted in a loss of jobs as a result of students turning to other countries for study options.”

“There is absolutely no evidence of widespread abuse of the student visa system by international students undertaking packaged programs. And yet the Immigration Minister alleges systemic abuse to justify these punitive, unnecessary changes.”

“Dedicated people will lose their jobs and good businesses will fail because of these changes.”

Mr Smith said that ACPET has to this point worked cooperatively with Government to enhance quality in the sector, and several Government and industry initiatives were already underway to do that.

“But instead of allowing the many quality initiatives time to take effect, the Federal Government has instead chosen to deal the sector another blow at a time when it is already under great pressure.”

“I now ask the Government to defer these changes, sit down with ACPET and other industry representatives as we have requested, and analyse the consequences and alternatives to these changes. We have real, effective and sustainable alternatives that will achieve the policy direction sought by the government without the harmful and costly consequences that have clearly nor been calculated nor considered.”

About ACPET:
ACPET is the leading industry body, which represents more than 1100 private colleges and institutions nation-wide. Interacting directly with college and institute owners on a regular basis, ACPET has a firm grasp on the issues facing the industry and has been attempting to put forward solutions which benefit all stakeholders.