MEDIA STATEMENT  
Thursday, November 11th, 2010  

Migration Points Test Endorses Education Pathway, But Skills List Too Narrow

The new general skilled migration points test reinforces the importance of international education in underpinning skilled migration, with more than 50% of the points required by applicants obtainable via an education pathway.

But the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) has warned that the revised skilled occupation list must effectively address worsening skills shortages across several industries.

ACPET A/g CEO, said the skilled occupation list must be based on transparent, labour market data if it is to truly address skills shortages and underpin productivity.

“Certainly we are pleased that the Australian Government has endorsed the importance of an education pathway to skilled migration by allocating more than 50% of the migration points to education pathways,” Ms Field said.

“International Education is, after all, one of Australia’s most important and successful export industries, and critically, it is one of the nation’s most powerful assets in addressing critical national challenges of skills shortages, an ageing national workforce and diplomatic relationships with our regional neighbours.”

“However, the Australian Government is saying to potential skilled migration applicants ‘you can’t come to Australia unless you’re on the list’, but the list itself ignores the needs of many industries that are seeking more skilled employees.”

"Australia has, for example, a nationwide shortages of qualified butchers and bakers. We also have the resources and expertise to provide first class training in these fields, and we have thousands of potential international students eager to obtain baking and butchery qualifications in Australia.

“And yet butchers and bakers are not included on the skilled occupation list," Ms Field said.

“The Australian Government has rightly reinforced the importance of international education as a migration pathway through the new points test, but the question remains whether the skilled occupations list will address productivity challenges in the Australian economy into the future.”

Claire Field is available for comment.  
Media Contact: Ben Eade, 0406 641 881