ACPET Calls for Tertiary Sector Administrative Improvements

Public administration of Australia’s tertiary education sector must improve if it is to underpin important changes in the sector and meet the needs of students, institutions, industry and community, the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) said today.

ACPET A/g CEO, Claire Field, said that with the pace of change in the sector set to increase next year, there are significant risks that ineffective or inconsistent administration will severely hamper the sector and those working within it.

“The need for competent and effective public administration of our tertiary system is more important than ever,” Ms Field said.

“Fundamental regulatory changes in the higher education and vocational education and training (VET) sectors, changes to public funding for VET, establishment of a Critical Skills Investment Advisory Board and the lifting of caps on Commonwealth Supported Places in universities are all substantial changes for this sector.”

“These changes bring great opportunities, but poorly thought through implementation of these reforms could trigger damaging unintended consequences.

“We are already seeing problems with the introduction of new Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) Standards allowing some organisations to exploit RTO fears by offering quick and cheap deals on Tuition Assurance.”

“In the international education sector, high quality institutions continue to weigh up whether they must close their doors or lay off staff because the student visa changes introduced by government to deal with the poor practices of a few providers are now destroying the businesses of so many.”

“Without changes to improve the administration of Australia’s student visa regime, longstanding and well-regarded Australian businesses will continue to suffer.”

Ms Field said the purpose of public administration is to facilitate the workings of the economy and society – to make things work.

“In the face of a lack of effective government administration, poor practices emerge, which can have dire consequences.”

“I urge Federal and State Governments and administrators to work with the sector, in earnest, to ensure that our sector is able to improve the administration of our sector during this difficult period of change.”

Claire Field is available for comment
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