MEDIA RELEASE
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Investment in NSW Education About More Than Just TAFE

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) said today that providing preferential funding arrangements for TAFE institutes over other educational institutions is not in the interests of students, industry or the state of NSW.

Responding to the NSW Teachers’ Federation’s “Invest in TAFE for a Better State” campaign, ACPET CEO, Claire Field, said it was critical that NSW’s Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector move beyond outdated notions of a need for barriers between private and public training institutions, in favour of funding that rewards quality and offers students and employers genuine choice.

“The fact is students and employers today want to choose the education institution that’s right for them, be it a traditional TAFE, a university or a high quality private institution.”

“Funding for all educational institutions must reflect and support that desire for choice and diversity, instead of falling back upon notions that are out of touch with today’s education system and what’s right for students and Australian industry.

Ms Field said that while TAFE institutes are an important part of the VET sector in Australia, they aren’t the only part.

“Recent research shows us that TAFE providers account for just 26% of the full-time equivalent students in the country, while 74% - that’s 1.4million FTE students – in high quality private vocational education and training institutions,” she said.

“Vocational Education and Training in Australia has evolved tremendously from the traditional trades, now offering work relevant courses in aged care, child-care, communications, design, IT, fitness and property services, as well as all of the traditional areas such as automotive, building and construction, hairdressing, hospitality and plumbing.”

“Statistically, the employment outcomes achieved by students studying for a VET qualification in a private institution are higher than those studying at TAFE.”

“The NSW Government should reward institutions that offer the best possible education, regardless of whether they are public or private institutions. The role of government should be to support students and employers to make their own choices about what institution is the right place to begin their studies.”

"Australia's economic future depends on a strong, well funded public vocational education and training system – not just a strong, well funded TAFE system.”

Media Contact: Ben Eade, 0406 641 881