MEDIA RELEASE
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ACPET Welcomes Government’s Commitment to Release Knight Review of Student Visas
Commends Premier Bligh for Leadership on International Education

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) today welcomed the Federal Governments commitment to releasing the Knight Review of Student Visas for consultation with industry and State & Territory Governments, with the peak body saying it stands ready to work with the Government to get the sector back on track.

ACPET also congratulated Queensland Premier, Anna Bligh, on securing support from States and Territories for three-year working visas for international graduates in areas of skills shortages, saying Premier Bligh’s leadership on international education has been crucial.

ACPET CEO, Claire Field, said international education is one of Australia's great export success stories, contributing tremendous social, economic and diplomatic benefit to the nation, but it is under threat because our student visa system is out of step with the rest of the world.

“Through the Knight Review of Student Visas, the Federal Government is working to address inconsistency and inefficiency in Australia's student visa system,” Ms Field said.

“Now, by agreeing to release the draft review of student visas and work with industry, the Australian Government, together with industry, have a great opportunity to get the changes right and arrest the decline in international education.” Ms Field said.

Ms Field said Premier Bligh’s commitment to international education had been crucial to securing support from the Federal Government, and she added that the Premier’s proposal for three-year working visas for international graduates shows that she understands the importance of international education as a solution to crippling skills shortages across many industries.

“A thriving, effective, international education sector, with close links to industry and supported by a student visa system that is efficient and effective, is one of the best assets our nation has to address the challenge of skills shortages that threaten many industries,” Ms Field said.

“I congratulate Premier Bligh and the Council of Australian Governments for showing that they are serious about arresting the decline in the vital International Education sector. ACPET looks forward to working with the Federal, State and Territory Governments to respond to the Knight Review of student visas, along with Premier Bligh’s proposal.”

Claire Field is available for comment
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