MEDIA RELEASE
15 November 2012

Private Training Providers making a critical contribution to nation’s economic success

The Australian Council for Private Education (ACPET) has welcomed reports released this week by the COAG Reform Council and the National Centre for the Vocational Education and Research (NCVER) that demonstrate that industry and individuals are benefiting from national policies designed to provide students and employers with greater choice and diversity in vocational education and training.

The NCVER report reveals that from 2010 to 2011, students enrolled in publicly funded vocational education and training (delivered under the Australian Qualifications Framework) increased from 1.422 million students to 1.575 million students. In the same twelve month period, students enrolling in private training providers increased by 59.3%.

“The NCVER data reveals the critical role the private sector is playing in helping to increase the skill levels of the Australian population” said Claire Field, Chief Executive Officer of the ACPET.

“The increase in students enrolling with private training providers is greater than the entire increase in Australia’s training and skilling effort over the period and clearly shows, now more than ever, that when given the choice students and employers are choosing a private provider.

“Despite the myths and misinformation coming from a variety of sources, the reality is private providers are getting on with the job of skilling the nation. They are providing training across a whole gamut of occupations and at all skill levels, increasingly they are providing life changing education and training to young people at risk, women returning to work, Indigenous Australians, newly arrived migrants and Australians with a disability” Ms Field said.

The subsequent release of the report of the COAG Reform Council Skills and Workforce Development 2011 shows more needs to be done. While Australia is on track to double the number of completions in diplomas and advanced diplomas, the Reform Council finds there is more to do to meet the COAG target of reducing the proportion of working age Australians without a higher level qualification to 23.6% by 2020.

Deputy Chairman of the COAG Reform Council, Professor Greg Craven, applauded COAG’s approval of the new National Partnership Agreement for Skills Reform at its April 2012 meeting, saying it could help improve on the current trend (to meet the COAG target of 23.6%).

"ACPET strongly supports the roll out of the National Partnership Agreement for Skills Reform. Well-planned and coordinated implementation of the reforms will be crucial to their success" said Ms Field.

“People should not be distracted by the small number of quality problems early on in the roll out of these reforms in Victoria. Student and employer satisfaction rates are very high and the sector is thriving. ACPET continues to work with governments and the Australian Skills Quality Authority to see quality continue to rise,” Ms Field said.

Claire Field is available for comment: 0411 240 671