MEDIA RELEASE
Thursday, 4th December, 2008

International education is a two way street, reforms must provide transitional arrangements for students

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) said today that any reforms to the education pathways to skilled migration must reflect the tremendous benefits international students bring to the country and provide transitional arrangements for international students already in Australia.

“Many international students currently studying in Australia are here with the expectation that their studies will be valued and give them the opportunity for a rewarding career in our country,” said Andrew Smith, National Executive Officer of ACPET.

“It is vital that any reforms respect that expectation by providing measured and long term transitional arrangements for students.”

“International education is not a ‘one way street’ on which the student has everything to gain and our Australian society has everything to give,” he said.

“On the contrary, international students diversify and enrich our national culture, forge longstanding personal and professional links between Australia and the rest of the world and contribute an estimated $14.2 billion to the national economy each year.

Mr Smith said most international students see their Australian education as the first step in a long and mutually rewarding association with Australia.

“A recent study found that 4 out of 5 international students reported that their studies are directly relevant to their work in Australia.”

“Education and training providers in Australia provide first-rate training that is highly sought after by students in Australia and around the world and delivers real benefits to the Australian community,” he said.

“ACPET and its members are committed to working collaboratively with the Australian Government to strike a balance between attracting skilled migrants to industries where they are most needed, and providing education and employment opportunities for Australians.”

Andrew Smith is available for comment
Media Contact: Ben Eade, Wilkinson Media, 0434 708 095