

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

07 June 2018

### **VET Student Loan scheme must contribute to skills in the economy**

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) has applauded the observations made by the Managing Director of TAFE NSW in the article *VET loan scheme unfair to TAFE students*, published today in The Australian.

Rod Camm, ACPET CEO said, “The effort to redefine a failed VET FEE -Help scheme has not only stopped the rot, but is also now negatively impacting on student choice”.

“There is an alarming reduction in students studying higher level qualifications, at a time where high end skills are increasingly becoming critical to the economy”, he said.

“The type of provider is irrelevant, it is about ensuring students have equitable access to a government loan that enables them to choose the qualification that best meets their needs and the provider that offers a qualification and learning style that maximises their likelihood of completion” he said.

The establishment of the VET Student Loans program has seen the government invest significantly in ensuring that only reputable providers can access the scheme and the Department now continually monitors their performance.

“These changes should enable Government to make changes that make it easier for students to access a range of qualifications and to progress accordingly”.

“The fact the administrative burden on students and providers is considerably different between VET and University is a real concern” Mr Camm said.

ACPET’s other concern is that students utilising a loan scheme whilst undertaking a VET qualification are required by the government to pay an additional 20% fee, a payment not required by their University counterparts. Likewise, students of independent higher education providers also must pay a tax of 25%.

“This is an alarming incentive for students to choose a University over a VET qualification when the reverse may in fact best suit the student’s chance of obtaining a job” Mr Camm said.

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