

MEDIA RELEASE

24 June 2016

Students deserve equal access to higher education support

Tertiary students studying at private higher education institutions are being unfairly and harshly penalised for their choice, according to the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET).

ACPET CEO Rod Camm said students choosing private higher education providers were charged a 25 per cent fee payable on their student loans and denied access to Commonwealth Supported Places (CSPs).

“ACPET is calling for both the Australian Labor Party and the Coalition to remove the 25 per cent fee payable on loans obtained through FEE-HELP which does not apply to university students accessing HECS-HELP,” he said.

“This reform would not only support greater student choice but address a fundamental inequity that has financially penalised some students simply because of their choice of higher education provider. This fee is simply indefensible.”

ACPET has also today written to both parties calling for the expansion of Commonwealth Supported Places (CSPs) to private higher education providers, increasing the availability of higher education to more students and enabling them to prepare for new and emerging job opportunities.

“Making CSPs available to a broader range of providers will increase the capacity, flexibility and options to respond to the needs of students across the country, including in regional areas where existing higher education options are limited or non-existent,” Mr Camm said.

“Many ACPET members have a proud and long history of providing quality tailored sub-degree programs that provide educational pathways and skilled job outcomes for migrants, the mature-aged, and disadvantaged learners, as well as those students looking for innovative courses and flexible delivery options.”

Mr Camm said genuine student choice was a key element of a quality higher education system.

“In higher education markets across Australia, students are increasingly choosing private providers,” he said.

“These students should have the same access to subsidised places and should not be penalised for choosing to undertake a course of study with a provider that best suits their individual needs.”

www.studentchoicecounts.com

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