

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Proposed policy would wind back 20 years of reform**

Student choice of quality private higher education and training is too important to sacrifice for short-sighted policies that would wind back 20 years of hard-won reform.

Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) CEO Rod Camm said private providers were chosen by more than half of Australia's training students.

"Private providers are integral to Australia's higher education and training system and have been delivering quality courses to students for more than two decades," Mr Camm said.

"Australia cannot afford to unravel more than 20 years of choice and contestability in our higher education and training systems. It has been a real disappointment to see the leader of the opposition attacking quality private provider businesses to justify their position to wind back reform."

Policy proposed by the Greens and Australian Labor Party (ALP) during the Federal Election campaign would strip away student choice, compromising affordability and quality.

Mr Camm said ACPET was calling on all parties to rule out caps on student loans in the training sector.

"Capping student training loans to an arbitrary \$8,000, as planned by the ALP, will not address issues of quality or cost," he said.

"Caps only serve to create higher, out of pocket up-front costs for students and serve as a barrier to entry into vocational education for many people."

Mr Camm said ACPET was also calling on both major parties to commit to removing the unfair loan fee imposed on students who study at private higher education institutes.

"Forcing students to pay back an extra 25 per cent of their course FEE-HELP loan fees just because they chose to study at a private provider is unfair and indefensible," he said.

"All we are asking for is a level playing field. There is no reason why students who choose a private provider over a public university for their degree should be treated as a second class student."

Mr Camm said limiting choice for students and employers, including apprentices, will stymie innovation, flexibility and quality.

"Now, more than ever, Australia needs flexible, innovative and responsive education and training system that will deliver the workforce for the future," he said.

"We are calling on all students and employers to show their support for student choice by signing the [Student Choice Counts](#) petition and supporting us through social media."

**ACPET CEO Rod Camm is available for interviews.  
Call SAS Group on 07 3221 9222 or 0467 792 013.**