

Media Release

VET Review Charts Direction To Be Welcomed By Those Seeking Skills

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For Immediate Release

The Australian Government’s review into the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system, undertaken by the Hon. Stephen Joyce, highlights the opportunities that exist through reforms focussed on those seeking skills. That’s the view of the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET), the peak body representing independent providers in the higher education, vocational education and training sector.

“Those entering the workforce, and those already working requiring reskilling, will welcome the broad direction that’s recommended in the review. Importantly, that the recommendations are focussed on student outcomes rather than delivery is an important outcome,” said Troy Williams, ACPET Chief Executive Officer.

In commenting on the VET review, ACPET noted it was independent providers that accept around sixty percent of all VET enrolments. Significantly, students in the independent VET sector have higher completion rates, higher starting salaries in new jobs and achieve this at a lower cost to the taxpayer than students studying at public TAFE colleges. This highlights the need for a strategic approach in identifying skills needs.

“The recommendations that a National Skills Commission be established that’s focussed on developing the nation’s skills needs across states, territories and the regions is a great step forward. It allows business and VET providers to plan for an invest in delivering the skills needed to support a growing economy,” Mr Williams said.

According to ACPET, the challenge for policy makers is to identify funding priorities and put in place arrangements that are agnostic as to the provider. Given the independent sector’s track-record in delivering outcomes more effectively than the public sector, this approach is welcome.

“The simple reality is that it costs more to support students in regional and remote Australia than it does in capital cities. ACPET therefore welcomes the recommendation that the National Skills Commission determine nationally consistent subsidy levels that include loadings to reflect differential costs that providers face when supporting students in remote and regional communities,” Mr Williams said.

In reflecting the comprehensive nature of the recommendations, ACPET said it will take a period of considered reflection to fully digest what it means not only for independent VET providers, but also for students in the VET sectors and their employers. The review’s recommendations are broad ranging; however, they do signal the need for a new direction.

“ACPET endorses without qualification the recommendation that the Australian Government, states and territories agreed to a new vision for the VET system that’s centred upon work-based learning. From here, all stakeholders can collaborate on delivering the quality outcomes that students and their employers are looking for,” Mr Williams concluded.

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