



MEDIA RELEASE

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ACPET urges more constructive dialogue on VET FEE-HELP

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) has called on Australia's political leaders to stop denigrating the vocational education and training sector.

Earlier today, the Federal Opposition Shadow Minister for TAFE and Vocational Education, the Hon Kate Ellis MP, issued a Media Release attacking the Turnbull Government for not reining in 'dodgy private providers' in the VET FEE-HELP system.

ACPET CEO Rod Camm said it was time for less politicking in the debate, warning that both sides risk ruining the sector's international reputation and could destroy the confidence of Australian students.

"This type of approach is not at all constructive and we call on all sides of politics to resist the urge to engage in political point scoring when it comes to the VET sector," Mr Camm said.

"Time and again, leaders from both sides of politics have talked down the sector purely for their own political purposes and today's comments from the Shadow Minister are just the latest in a long line of attacks from both sides of the political spectrum.

This sort of political rhetoric damages the sector's international reputation and causes Australian students and prospective students to lose confidence.

"Both young Australians and prospective apprentices are being indoctrinated with language that makes them believe that the entire system is poor.

This ignores the fact the overwhelmingly majority of providers continue to deliver great outcomes for Australia.

"Trashing the sector shows a lack of political leadership and a focus on short-term political point scoring as opposed to addressing the current problems.

"It is also unacceptable to blame those who are unable to defend themselves – Australia's great private providers who delivered to over 3 million people last year.

"Yes, the sector needs better regulation, government oversight and monitoring of expenditure and we call on both sides of politics to focus on this.

“We call for proper consultation with the sector to ensure that any resulting reform achieves a meaningful difference.

“The VET FEE-HELP program requires well supported TAFE’s, quality private providers and strong political leadership, and not endless point scoring from both sides that only damages the reputation of the sector.”

[ENDS]

Rod Camm is available for interview. Please phone the SAS Group on 07 3221 9222, or directly on 0409 484 051.