

Media Release

ACPET's New Chair Signals Policy Advocacy Focus

— 01 February 2019
For Immediate Release

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET), the peak business organisation representing independent providers in the higher education and vocational education and training sectors has appointed a new Chair, Mr Alexis Watt.

Mr Watt has been a Director representing South Australia on the ACPET Board since 2016 and has more recently served as Deputy Chair. Beyond ACPET, Mr Watt is the Chief Executive Officer of Open Colleges School of Health, an independent Registered Training Organisation (RTO) in the Open Colleges group specialising in the nursing, health, aged care and community services sectors. Mr Watt brings experience from over fifteen years in the hospitality industry overlapping with more than twenty years in the VET and higher education sectors.

ACPET's change in national leadership comes as the organisation sets about implementing a significant restructure of its operations that will provide the platform upon which ACPET will strengthen its advocacy efforts. ACPET's focus will be ensuring that policy makers understand and work to strengthen the important role of independent providers in the higher education and vocational education and training sectors.

"Working with our members we will influence the future direction of tertiary education. To do this we will strengthen collaborative relationships with stakeholders across the sector and present to government the evidence-based policy options that will provide students and employers with the quality outcomes they are looking for," Mr Watt said.

During Mr Watt's term a major priority will be to fully implement ACPET's industry certification and practitioner registration schemes.

"ACPET will deliver high priority, value-add services to meet member and industry needs, this will include raising the recognition of the Industry Certification Program by members, government and regulators through focused engagement strategies," Mr Watt, ACPET Chairman said.

In accepting the position of Chair Mr Watt paid tribute to the outgoing Chairman Bruce Callaghan who is retiring from the Board.

"Bruce provided exceptionally strong leadership to the Board and negotiated many of the outcomes that today have placed ACPET in a position where its focus is firmly on the future," Mr Watt said.

ACPET members make a significant contribution to education and the economy and are representative of the independent sector that delivers training to over 3,000,000 million students a year, with a workforce of some 100,000 people.

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ACPET Ref: 5.1.2