

Media Release —

ITECA's Formation Kicks-starts The Debate On Tertiary Education Reform

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For Immediate Release

Australia's independent higher education providers have signalled their intent to drive the debate about the need to reform the education system through the launch of the Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia (ITECA).

"The tertiary education system includes independent providers in the higher education, vocational education and training sectors. It's time to reform the education system where these sectors can operate as one whilst retaining their separate identity," said Troy Williams, ITECA Chief Executive.

ITECA has its genesis in the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET), with its members approving the transition from ACPET to ITECA at an extraordinary general meeting held in early May 2019. The transition follows a two-year process of consulting independent higher education, vocational education and training providers plus stakeholders across government and the business community.

"These consultations identified a growing recognition on the need for reform. Throughout their working lives employees will need to train and reskill to meet the challenges associated with technological disruption. Australia deserves an integrated tertiary education system in which the higher education, vocational education and training sectors operate as one to deliver students and their employees with the quality outcomes they are looking for," Mr Williams said.

ITECA has established a Canberra-based policy and research team to drive the case for reform. A high-level advocacy priority is for reform of government funding arrangements.

"We need a funding system that blends private contributions with government funding and permits students to easily transition between the higher education and vocational training sectors. Importantly, government funding needs to be agnostic as to the provider allowing students to choose a quality independent provider, a public university or public TAFE college. It's all about student choice," Mr Williams said.

As the peak umbrella organisation representing the independent tertiary education system, ITECA's focus is on building an appreciation of the value that independent providers bring to the table.

"By almost any metric it's the independent tertiary education system that offers higher quality outcomes at a lower cost to the taxpayer. Whether its completion rates, student satisfaction rates, post-training employment outcomes – the independent sector offers outcomes equal to or better than public providers," Mr Williams said.

ITECA is positioned to hit the ground running as it represents more than one-half of independent providers in the higher education sector. Building upon ACPET's historical position as the peak body for the vocational training sector, ITECA's pre-eminence in that sector is unparalleled.

"ITECA provides leadership, strategy, advocacy and support. Our members set our agenda, fund our activities and directly benefit from the results," Mr Williams said.

Ends.