

Media Release —

VET Sector Reform – It’s independent providers that offer the best solution

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For Immediate Release

Ahead of a Council of Australian Governments meeting in Cairns where vocational education and training (VET) will be on the agenda, the Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia (ITECA) highlights the fact that independent providers offer the best chance to achieve an improvement in the way VET operates. ITECA is the peak body representing the independent vocational education, higher education and training sectors.

“If we’re serious about reforms that will give Australia the skills it needs today and into the future, it’s clear that the solution rests with independent VET providers as they already do the heavy lifting in delivering quality outcomes for students,” said Troy Williams, ITECA Chief Executive.

In the VET sector 64% of students undertaking a Certificate IV qualification are with independent providers (TAFE: 31%) and some 58% of students undertaking a Certificate III qualification are with independent providers (TAFE: 36%).

“From the perspective of the taxpayer, it’s independent VET providers that achieve the best outcomes. Students with independent VET providers have better post-training employment outcomes and record a higher level of satisfaction with the overall quality of their training,” Mr Williams said.

ITECA was confident that VET sector reform was broadly heading in the right direction thanks to the recommendations set out in the report entitled *Strengthening Skills: Expert Review of Australia's Vocational Education and Training System* commissioned by the Prime Minister and prepared by Steven Joyce, a former New Zealand Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

“The recommendations in the Joyce Review signal that meaningful reform is on the way and ITECA is appreciative of the high-level of engagement that we’ve had with the government as to what the next steps will be. There are some aspects of the report that our members fully support and others that we’re working with the government on; however, on balance it’s a step in the right direction,” Mr Williams said

ITECA believes that the COAG meeting considering VET reform should take a strong look at funding models.

“What’s required now is a change to the funding system to ensure that Commonwealth VET funding, when distributed via the states and territories, is fully contestable. This will allow established independent providers the chance to access funding in order to provide students and their employers with the quality outcomes they are looking for – after all, this is what ITECA members do best.”

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