

Media Release —

COAG Skills Council Gets It Right With Regulatory Reform

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For Immediate Release

The focus of the COAG Skills Council on effective regulation of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector has been welcomed by the Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia (ITECA), the peak body representing independent providers in the higher education, vocational education, training and skills sectors.

The communiqué from the COAG Skills Council meeting on 20 September 2019 in Melbourne confirmed its view that effective regulation is central to the quality of and confidence in the VET sector, something welcomed by ITECA. The meeting set out the position that the national VET regulator, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) should improve its engagement with the VET sector and expand its educative role.

“ITECA welcomes this strong message from the COAG Skills Council message that aligns with our view. We’re a strong proponent for a student-centric model in which ASQA works collaboratively with independent providers to deliver the quality outcomes students are looking for,” said Troy Williams, ITECA Chief Executive.

ITECA has been working with the Australian Government as the latter considers recommendations arising from the Joyce Review of the VET system. The Joyce Review emphasised it is critical to ensure that training providers are aware of, and supported to understand, their compliance requirements, and that regulatory decisions are transparent.

“Students, their employers and VET providers alike will be well served when we have a regulatory system that offers consistency, transparency and accountability in decision making. The Joyce Review sets a clear path to achieve this and ITECA is pleased that the COAG Skills Council has embraced the necessary reforms,” Mr Williams said.

In recent times, ASQA has been criticised in parliament for an approach to regulation that is less focussed on protecting student outcomes and more on low-level administrative breaches on legislation that have little to no impact on student outcomes.

“Like the COAG Skills Council, ITECA is calling for immediate activity to reform ASQA’s regulatory approach, improve confidence in the regulator and support continuous improvement in training provision across the VET sector,” Mr Williams concluded.

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