

## Media Release —

### Interim Skills Commissioner Has The Toughest Job In Australian Education

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The Australian Government has announced that Adam Boyton was appointed the Interim National Skills Commissioner. This is the toughest job in Australian education. That's the view of the Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia (ITECA), the peak body representing independent providers in the higher education, vocational education, training and skills sectors.

"To continue its record-breaking run of uninterrupted economic growth, the Australian economy needs access to a highly trained workforce. The role of the Interim Skills Commissioner is pivotal to this goal and Mr Boyton has some real challenges ahead looking beyond the training system, but also Australia's skilled migration program," said Mr Troy Williams, ITECA Chief Executive.

ITECA is of the view that the skilled migration program needs to be considered in the context of the capacity of the vocational education and training system to deliver a skilled workforce. ITECA notes that the appointment comes at a time where the tertiary education system is going through a period of significant and welcome reform.

"Funding models, the structure of the qualifications framework and red-tape reduction are all currently being reviewed. Then there is the co-design process for the National Skills Commission, National Careers Institute and Skills Organisation Pilots. During this necessary upheaval the Interim National Skills Commissioner has to develop new skills forecasting and funding models," Mr Williams said.

The role of the Interim National Skills Commissioner is important to the independent vocational education and training system that supports around 70% of the 4.1 million students in vocational education and training. These students are supported by a mix of funding models that differ between states and territories that don't necessarily invest in the skills needed by business.

"The Interim Skills Commissioner has what is arguably the toughest job in Australian education. Mr Boyton's challenge is to work with the business community to forecast where the jobs of tomorrow will be, the skills needed to support workers to access these jobs then develop funding models. It's a tough gig," Mr Williams said.

The appointment of the Interim National Skills Commissioner comes at a major time of reform. ITECA is supportive of the Australian Governments agenda that is transforming the vocational education and training sector. The commitment of \$525 million by the Australian Government in its *Delivering Skills for Today and Tomorrow* package is designed to strengthen the architecture of our national skills system, ensuring Australia continues to provide high quality training and job-ready employees.

"We look forward to working with the Interim National Skills Commissioner in order to ensure that independent providers can continue to play the lead role in delivering the quality outcomes that students and their employers are looking for," Mr Williams said.

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