

Media Release —

COVID-19 Response – Focus On Students Not Red-tape

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For Immediate Release

To ensure that independent tertiary education providers are focussed on student and not red-tape, it's appropriate for government so suspend routine reporting and compliance activity. That's the advice to government from the Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia (ITECA), the peak body representing independent providers in the higher education, vocational education, training and skills sectors.

"The response to the Covid-19 outbreak is placing an unprecedented strain on independent tertiary education providers as they work to support students. Challenges with on-site delivery, a transition to online training and assessment and trying to figure out what to do when work placements for students aren't possible, are just some of the issues confronting independent providers," said Mr Troy Williams, ITECA Chief Executive.

To ensure that these providers are properly focussed on supporting students, ITECA has called on government to suspend routine compliance and reporting activity.

"We're asking that the higher education regulator and regulators in the vocational education and training sector suspend routine reporting and compliance activity. This isn't to understate the importance of this activity, but now is the time for providers to focus on students and not red-tape," Mr Williams said.

Acknowledging the need to preserve quality in the independent tertiary education sector, ITECA accepts that both public and independent providers that regulators consider to be at-risk of non-compliance, should continue to face audits and reporting activity.

"Independent tertiary education providers have a track record of offering students and their employers the quality outcomes they are looking for. These ITECA members are firmly focussed on supporting students and, in these troubled times, we want them focussed on this activity rather than filling-in government form after government form," Mr Williams concluded.

Independent providers support around 10% of the 1.5 million students in higher education and nearly 80% of the 4.1 million students in vocational education and training.

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