

Media Release —

\$13 Million Needed To Expedite Online Tertiary Education Delivery

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For Immediate Release

To support independent tertiary education providers transition to support students with online education, training and assessment, the Australian Government has been provided with a recommendation for a \$13 million initiative. Its proponent is the Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia (ITECA), the peak body representing providers in the higher education, vocational education, training and skills sector.

“The social distancing measures to control the spread of the Covid-19 virus have made it impractical for many independent tertiary education providers to continue face-to-face delivery. Providers are having to transition to online delivery and make this investment exactly at the time that new enrolments are drying-up thus limiting their cashflow. That’s what makes the proposed grant program so important,” said Mr Troy Williams, ITECA Chief Executive.

In its action plan entitled **COVID-19 Response — Backing Independent Tertiary Education Providers**, ITECA has set out a recommendation for grants of up to \$25,000 to be provided to allow five hundred independent tertiary education providers transition to online training and assessment.

“This measure would provide timely and targeted assistance for independent providers as they work to support students no longer able to attend classes. It includes funding for both acquisition of technology and additional mentoring,” Mr Williams said.

As the independent sector accelerates the deployment of online education, training and assessment, ITECA has been keen to ensure that the sector maintains its reputation for offering students and their employers the quality outcomes they are looking for.

“Online delivery presents as many new opportunities as it does challenges, so the funding proposal includes development of a new collaboration framework where those providers with experience in this field mentor those providers entering the space for the first time,” Mr Williams said.

The initiative that ITECA has recommended to the Australian Government would include a capital grant of \$22,500 (GST excluded) for up to five hundred providers to purchase and commission equipment to facilitate online learning. The cost of this initiative is a maximum of \$13.1 million based upon the take-up by five hundred providers (capped) at the maximum grant amount.

“This is one of the key measures set out in the **COVID-19 Response — Backing Independent Tertiary Education Providers** action plan that will allow independent providers to continue delivering high-quality training in these challenging times,” Mr Williams said.

Around 10% of the 1.5 million students in higher education are supported by independent providers. Some 80% of the 4.1 million students in vocational education and training are supported by independent providers.

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