



MEDIA RELEASE

29 November 2018

TAFEs will engage in review of vocational education and training

TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) looks forward to engaging in the review of vocational education and training (VET) announced by the Prime Minister last night at an Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry function.

The Chief Executive of TDA Craig Robertson noted the key focus of the review is the future of work, and new approaches needed to help students gain the skills needed to pursue their aspirations in work and enterprise.

“Any review that seriously examines these issues and considers preparing people for the future and seeks new investment from the Commonwealth directed to high quality vocational education is welcome,” Mr Robertson said.

Mr Robertson said recent comments by former Prime Minister John Howard were relevant and should help inform the review. Mr Howard noted that the TAFE sector had been denuded of funding and reduced in esteem, while the tertiary education sector had become lopsided, with too many people at university and too few doing technical training.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced that former New Zealand Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment in the Key Government, Stephen Joyce, will complete the review by March.

TDA will work to assist the review and advance the interests of students, however notes that the time allowed for such important work is limited, especially as submissions are required by 25 January 2019.

“There are also some easy areas to examine, such as the government’s VET Student Loans scheme which is plainly inadequate.

“Few quality-committed providers can deliver diploma or advanced diploma courses for the loan amounts on offer. Public funding for vocational qualifications needs to be re-grounded, as industry is demanding more from vocational education providers to meet the needs of the modern workplace, yet governments are paying less,” Mr Robertson said.

While the [terms of reference](#) show there will be open engagement with the sector, it states that Mr Joyce will host discussion with states and territories and industry but not provider groups such as TDA, Community Colleges Australia or ACPET.

“This is unfortunate because without the considered input of vocational education experts, the balance between industry and training providers, which is so desperately needed in the sector, will compromise any findings,” he said.

“We would hope that the consultation process is sufficiently broad to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are heard. Fundamental to the review’s success is working toward a new shared vision for vocational education in Australia,” he added.

Media contact: Bob Bowden, Foresight Communications, bbowden@bowmac.com.au 0412 753 298

TAFE Directors Australia is the peak national body representing 28 TAFE institutes, including six dual sector universities with TAFE divisions.