



# Press Release

27 May 2015

## Education without Ethics

Government recognised training providers are facing a strengthening tide of cynicism following what many consider highly unethical treatment of students.

Offering 'immediate gratification' rewards to vulnerable target markets such as young people, media reports suggest that some RTOs are:

1. Signing up students with the promise of 'no upfront payments' and government funding;
2. Glossing over the fact that they are shackling them to many years of debt repayment;
3. Sending them out into a market that will not require the sub-standard qualifications they undertook. In this case, they would have no hope of reaching the earning threshold to being paying back their debt- hardly a clever move by the Australian Government.

A study by Sydney University confirms this highly untenable situation:

"There has been no commensurate scrutiny of the costs and benefits attached to diploma and advanced diplomas, yet course fees are wholly deregulated."

The report, commissioned by public education supporters the Australian Education Union, warns that many VET FEE-HELP loans may never be repaid because typical diploma-qualified occupations — such as aged care, childcare and retail store management — attract award wages around \$10,000 below the current VET Fee-Help repayment threshold of \$53,345." (Source: John Ross, Higher Education Reporter, The Australian, FEBRUARY 11, 2015)

This scheme has:

1. Limited the choices open to students
2. Hiked fees to soaring levels and
3. Negatively impacted on training quality.

Worse still, many RTOs are not allowing a period for students to withdraw should they change their mind. In an attempt to reign in this highly unethical culture, the Government is considering establishing a 'cooling off period' for students who signed up impulsively: "Assistant Minister for Education and Training Simon Birmingham is concerned that some colleges use high-pressure sales tactics — including door-to-door and phone sales — to enrol vulnerable or inappropriate students." (Source: The Australian, April 6<sup>th</sup> 2015)

### **WHY STUDENTS OFTEN CHOOSE ACS?**

ACS Distance Education has deliberately steered clear of the Government system, holding fast to its commitment to ethically delivered high quality education. ACS has always offered a cooling off period of 14 days, and other options beyond that. A focus on positive outcomes for students seems logical to Principal John Mason, who supports establishing a passion for life-long learning in students over a cynical drive to grab Government funding.



If you have any queries or would like to arrange an interview or a review copy of this eBook, please call or email the ACS head office on the Gold Coast on (07) 5562 1088 and ask for our Media and Marketing Officers ([admin@acs.edu.au](mailto:admin@acs.edu.au)).

**About ACS Distance Education ...** Established in 1979, ACS Distance Education is a leading Australian Distance Education provider offering over 600 courses via correspondence, online or on CDs. The Institution has offices in Australia and the United Kingdom and has Affiliates in Australia, Philippines, Singapore, UK, New Zealand, France and Ireland. ACS has educated thousands of students, many of whom have gone onto successful employment, both in industry or in their own businesses.