

Mr Don Perlgut
Chief Executive Officer
Community Colleges Australia
admin@cca.edu.au

Dear Mr Perlgut

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the views of the Liberal and Nationals Government on issues you have raised on behalf of your membership. Our response is attached.

This election will have real consequences for regional Australia and the nation's economy and our future.

Despite global headwinds, our economy is strong. This year, for the first time in more than a decade, the Government will deliver a Budget surplus.

We know the potential of regional Australia, our people and communities. That's why The Nationals fight for your fair share.

By working together, we're putting locals first to build a stronger regional Australia.

We are putting locals first to deliver:

- Relief for household pressures;
- Secure local jobs and better wages;
- Quality local healthcare and education choices;
- Local roads, transport & infrastructure that works;
- Safer regional communities;
- Protecting our local way of life for future generations.

We can do all of this because of a strong economy.

The alternative at this election is Mr Shorten. Labor's risky agenda includes \$387 billion of higher taxes – on retirees, housing, incomes, investments, family businesses and electricity.

Yours sincerely



Ben Hindmarsh
Campaign Director



LIBERAL AND NATIONALS GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY COLLEGES AUSTRALIA

To ensure Australians have the skills they need to drive a growing economy, the Morrison Government is investing more than 5585 million in our Delivering Skills for Today and Tomorrow package in the vocational education and training (VET) sector to better equip Australians with the skills they need.

The package of measures will include up to 80,000 new apprenticeships in industries with skills shortages through a doubling of incentive payments to employers (to \$8,000). The new apprentices – including bakers, bricklayers, plasterers, hairdressers, plumbers and carpenters – will also receive a \$2,000 incentive payment.

This commitment is in addition to the Morrison Government's Skilling Australians Fund that supports projects that will train apprentices in areas of high employment demand and in future growth industries.

The Coalition has continued to invest in skills development. This year alone the Morrison Government will invest more than 53 billion in skills and vocational education including \$1.5 billion to the states and territories for skills development through the *National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development Specific Purpose Payment*.

This ensures states and territories have the ability to decide how to allocate this funding within their own training sectors. Across Australia, the states and territories support a combination of TAFEs, private for-profit providers (including dual sector universities), and private not-for-profit providers.

Funding allocation is a responsibility for the state and territory governments.

To address youth unemployment in regional Australia and create better connections between school students, employers and the VET sector the Morrison Government will also establish ten industry Training Hubs.

The Hubs will create better connections between local industry and schools to improve outcomes for students, employers and the VET sector. They will be an on-the-ground presence where new approaches are needed to help students transition from school to training and work, and are supported by 400 VET scholarships.

The Morrison Government is ensuring the VET training system is flexible and responsive to critical skills shortages as they emerge and is undertaking some longer-term reforms in line with the recommendations of the Joyce Review, such as the establishment of a National Skills Commission and a National Careers Institute.

We are also supporting lifelong learning by expanding the unique student identifier to all tertiary students and creating a Tertiary Learning Repository. These measures provide a necessary down-payment for developing a more flexible system of learning across a worker's lifetime.

We are supporting STEM skills development in all stages of the pipeline, including early childhood education, secondary and post-secondary education, workforce skills, and STEM engagement and awareness.

Our initiatives include \$51 million for our Embracing the Digital Age schools initiative, \$14 million for STEM early learning programs, and over \$20 million in gender equality initiatives for STEM, including appointing Australia's first women in STEM Ambassador.

The Morrison Government will establish a new national program and a series of pilots to address low language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills among employed and recently unemployed Australians.

One in five Australians have poor literacy and numeracy, robbing them of the fundamental skills for employment or career progression. This program will help participants engage with further training and job opportunities.

The Morrison Government stands for quality and integrity in Australia's vocational education and training system. We cleaned up Labor's failed VET FEE-HELP scheme that left thousands of young Australians ripped off by dodgy training providers, leaving them with a mountain of debt and no qualification to show for it.

Between 2011 and 2013, Labor cut employer incentives to businesses employing apprentices a total of nine times (at a cost of \$1.2 billion).

While Bill Shorten was Employment Minister, the number of apprentices and trainees in training collapsed by 22 per cent or 110,000 – the biggest annual decline ever.

By contrast, the Morrison Government is supporting employers with a range of incentives that will be streamlined to make them easier to navigate.

Training Hubs

The Morrison Government will establish 1.0 industry Training Hubs to address the challenge of high youth unemployment in regional areas. The Hubs will create better connections between local industry and schools to improve outcomes for students, employers and the VET sector. They will be an on-the-ground presence where new approaches are needed to help students transition from school to training and work.

The Hubs will facilitate additional education for trainers as well as career advice and mentoring for young people with a specific focus on traditional in-demand trades. A career facilitator will form partnerships between industries in sectors of local skills shortages and those providing advice and education to students.

This initiative will support year 11 and 12 students at 10 selected pilot sites across regional Australia.

Commonwealth Scholarship Program for Young Australians

The Morrison Government will establish a Commonwealth Scholarships Program for Young Australians to help more young people enter the vocational education and training sector and gain the skills they need for a successful and rewarding career.

Four hundred Commonwealth Scholarships will be available to students in regions surrounding the pilot industry training hubs to provide a comprehensive pathway for young job-seekers in those regions.

Successful students will receive scholarship funding up to \$1-7,500, depending on scholarship length and the type of study or training, for a maximum period of three years.

Priority will be given to eligible applicants in the following cohorts:

- individuals who have exited from the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in the previous two years (the age criteria will not be applicable for ADF applicants);
- Indigenous young Australians;
- young Australians with a disability; and
- young Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

National Skills Commission and Skills Organisations

In line with recommendations of the Joyce Review, the Morrison Government will establish a National Skills Commission to build a nationwide approach to skills development that serves students, industry and drives long-term VET reform.

The Commission will undertake research and analysis of future skills needs and investigate the efficient and fair price of qualifications. The Commission will also play a role in

promoting apprenticeships, including by collaborating with industry to assess and respond to workforce needs.

Linked to the Commission, new Skills Organisations will be piloted in areas of future jobs growth. The Organisations will provide industry-based advice and develop industry partnerships to trial new ways to develop VET qualifications.

The initial pilots will be in the growth areas of human services, digital technologies and cyber security.

National Careers Institute and National Careers Ambassador

The Morrison Government will establish a National Careers Institute to transform the delivery of career advice for Australians across the life of their education, training and employment.

This will be supported by a National Careers Ambassador who will have strong relationships with key stakeholders and raise the profile of VET.

The institute will address a current gap in quality careers information to support the transition from school to further study or training.

As the expectations of employers evolve, young people and others transitioning through multiple careers and jobs need to know what to study to match their ambitions to the demand for skills.

The Morrison Government will establish a competitive grants program to support high impact programs that build innovative partnerships between schools, tertiary providers and employers.

This will enable employers to play an active support role in developing the skills they need for the jobs of the future.

Grants of up to \$ 350,000 will be available for eligible partnerships. The National Careers Institute will administer the program.

National Program to Address Language, Literacy, Numeracy and Digital (LLND) Skills Deficits

The Morrison Government will establish a new national program and a series of pilots to address low language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills among employed and recently unemployed Australians.

One in five Australians have poor literacy and numeracy, robbing them of the fundamental skills for employment or career progression.

This program will help participants engage with further training and job opportunities. Foundational skill levels are an even greater concern in remote Indigenous communities. Pilot programs will be undertaken in four locations to address the needs of adults in these communities with LLND skills deficits. The pilots will be co-designed with local Indigenous community members.