



Minister for City Services  
Minister for Multicultural Affairs  
Minister for Recycling and Waste Reduction  
Minister for Roads and Active Travel  
Minister for Tertiary Education  
Minister for Transport  
  
Member for Murrumbidgee

Mr Mark Field  
Treasurer  
Association of Providers of Training Services  
[markf@accessrt.edu.au](mailto:markf@accessrt.edu.au)

Dear Mr Field

Thank you for your email to the Chief Minister on 28 February 2020 and for sharing the Association of Providers of Training Services (APTS) *Report into the potential impacts of the 2020 User Choice and Skilled Capital funding cuts for the Australian Capital Territory*. I am responding on behalf of the Chief Minister as Tertiary Education is now within my portfolio.

The Skills and Vocational Education and Training Sector is currently experiencing unprecedented uncertainty, with the COVID-19 pandemic impacting the sector and the economy more broadly. The ACT Government is supporting the capacity of the VET sector during the current crisis by increasing subsidies for apprentices, trainees and other VET learners to access nationally recognised training in skills needs areas across a range of industries. Measures to address historical financial pressures in the User Choice and Skilled Capital programs and return spending on these programs to budgeted amounts, such as those referenced in the APTS report implemented in January 2020, will be suspended until 2021. I have asked Skills Canberra to engage and work with APTS on how that is best achieved once we are through the immediate COVID-19 crisis.

As an immediate step, Australian Apprenticeships (User Choice) and Skilled Capital qualification subsidy amounts will be reinstated to 2019 levels and backdated for User Choice commencements and Skilled Capital enrolments from 15 January 2020. Skills Canberra will also release additional Skilled Capital places to address the immediate training needs emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic and support sustainability of the early childhood education and care, aged care, health care, disability and hospitality sectors.

I understand that you have requested financial data from Skills Canberra that has informed the need to take measures to bring spending on subsidies back to budgeted amounts. I have asked Skills Canberra to make this data available to you through the next ACT Skills Needs List consultation due to commence in the next few months. It is my expectation that the sector and Skills Canberra can work to develop a package that ensures Government subsidies for training remain effective and sustainable. Skills Canberra is currently investigating online and other available options to support this engagement.

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## ACT Legislative Assembly

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chrissteellabor



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Thank you for your interest in the ACT VET sector and for sharing the APTS report with me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris Steel', written in a cursive style.

Chris Steel MLA

1 May 2020