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HISTORIC MOU BETWEEN BUSINESS AND UNIVERSITIES TO BOOST GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), Australia's largest and most representative business and industry organisation and the Innovative Research Universities (IRU), a network of seven comprehensive high quality universities covering all mainland States and the Northern Territory, today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) aimed at boosting the employability skills of graduates.

A key objective of the MOU is to promote and enhance Work Integrated Learning (WIL) partnerships between businesses and universities. ACCI and IRU will bring together their respective expertise, knowledge and networks to develop a WIL framework which actively responds to industry and business demand for graduates with relevant employability skills.

WIL, which is a priority area of focus for the IRU network, is an umbrella term for approaches and strategies which integrate the theory and the practice of work within a purposefully designed curriculum. WIL includes work-based learning options such as practicums, internships, clinical placements, professional placements, and work experience.

ACCI strongly supports the inclusion of WIL in students' higher education studies for the joint benefits it brings to the students and to the business community. Benefits include the development and acquisition of employability skills, Career Development Learning, and building the concept of lifelong learning.

In addition the student has exposure to realistic workplace settings and modern industry practices. Richer learning experiences are afforded to students as the theory learnt in a classroom is deepened through practical application.

The MOU acknowledges the critical role both parties play in ensuring quality arrangements are in place for WIL and their commitment to working together to achieve them.

Greg Evans, Acting CEO of ACCI said "The business community will benefit from this MOU by getting involved with WIL and taking a more strategic approach to accessing the supply of work ready graduates."

On signing the MOU on behalf of IRU, the Vice-Chancellor of Griffith University, Professor Ian O'Connor said that it represented a groundbreaking partnership.

"By working together, we can expand the availability of quality WIL experiences for our students, streamline organisational processes and assist employers to reap the benefits of providing WIL opportunities," Professor O'Connor said.

For further information:

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