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Committee Secretary
Senate Education and Employment Committees
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Email: eec.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary,

Submission from the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia

The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia (the Academy) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the *Jobs and Skills Australia Bill 2022* and the *Jobs and Skills Australia (National Skills Commissioner Repeal) Bill 2022*.

The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that draws on the expertise of over 700 Fellows to provide practical, evidence-based advice to governments, businesses, and the community on important social policy issues.

Education and training play a significant role in labour supply and the Academy welcomes the creation of Jobs and Skills Australia to provide independent advice on current, emerging, and future workforce, skills, and training needs.

Ensuring Australia's skills and labour market policies and programs are informed by the latest evidence (*Clause 9*) and genuine tripartite engagement (*Clause 10*) will be crucial to boost workforce participation and drive Australia's continued economic recovery and national resilience for the decades to come.

In particular, the Academy welcomes the agency's expanded focus on the resourcing and funding requirements of the vocational education and training (VET) system. 44% of all VET students are enrolled in courses in the social sciences, including business, education, and allied health. These graduates can be found at the frontline in vital industries with critical skill shortages such as childcare, aged care, education and training and health, among others.

The Academy is eager to ensure the advice provided by Jobs and Skills Australia will also seek to improve workforce participation outcomes for women, Indigenous workers, older workers, workers with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

Academy Fellows are at the forefront of labour market research, data and analysis and the Academy would be pleased to facilitate their further engagement with the Commonwealth Government on the ongoing structure and function of Jobs and Skills Australia.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Richard Holden FES FASSA
President